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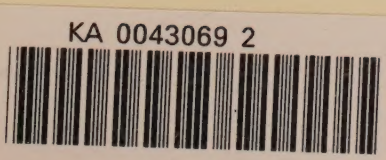

THOMAS CARLYLE

1834–1881

VOL. II.

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THOMAS CARLYLE

A HISTORY OF HIS LIFE IN LONDON

1834–1881

BY

JAMES ANTHONY FROUDE, M.A.

HONORARY FELLOW OF EXETER COLLEGE, OXFORD

WITH PORTRAIT ENGRAVED ON STEEL

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. II.

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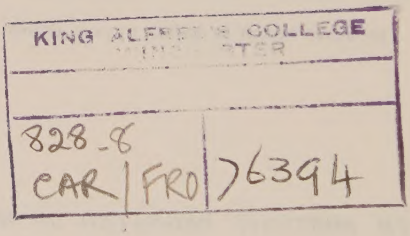
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LIFE IN LONDON.

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CARLYLE'S purpose of writing a book on Ireland was not to be fulfilled. He went thither. He travelled through the four provinces. After his return he jotted down a hurried account of his experiences; but that was all the contribution which he was able to make for the solution of a problem which he found at once too easy and too hopeless. Ireland is an enchanted country. There is a land ready, as any land ever was, to answer to cultivation. There is a people ready to cultivate it, to thrive, and cover the surface of it with happy, prosperous homes, if ruled, like other nations, by methods which suit their temperament. If the Anglo-Saxons had set about governing Ireland with the singleness of aim with

which they govern India or build their own railways, a few seasons at any time would have seen the end of its misery and discontent. But the Anglo-Saxons have never approached Ireland in any such spirit. They have had the welfare of Ireland on their lips. In their hearts they have thought only of England's welfare, or of what in some narrow prejudice they deemed to be such, of England's religious interests, commercial interests, political interests. So it was when Henry II. set up Popery there. So it was when Elizabeth set up the Protestant Establishment there. So it is now when the leaders of the English Liberals again destroy that Establishment to secure the Irish votes to their party in Parliament. The curse which has made that wretched island the world's by-word is not in Ireland in itself, but in the inability of its conquerors to recognise that, if they take away a nation's liberty, they may not use it as the plaything of their own selfishness or their own factions. For seven hundred years they have followed on the same lines : the principle the same, however opposite the action. As it was in the days of Strongbow, so it is to-day ; and 'healing measures,' ushered in no matter with what pomp of eloquence or parade of justice, remain, and will remain, a mockery. Carlyle soon saw how it was. To write on Ireland, as if a remedy could be found there, while the poisonous fountain still flowed at Westminster unpurified, would be labour vain as spinning ropes of moonshine. He noted down what he had seen, and then dismissed the unhappy subject from his mind ; giving his manuscript to a friend as something of which he desired to hear no more for ever. It was

published after his death, and the briefest summary of what to himself had no value is all that need concern us here. He left London on the 30th of June in a Dublin steamboat. He could sleep sound at sea, and therefore preferred 'long sea' to land when the choice was offered him. Running past the Isle of Wight, he saw in the distance Sterling's house at Ventnor; he saw Plymouth, Falmouth, the Land's End. Then, crossing St. George's Channel, he came on the Irish coast at Wexford, where the chief scenes of the Rebellion of 1798 stand clear against the sky.

I thought (he writes) of the battle of Vinegar Hill, but not with interest; with sorrow, rather, and contempt; one of the ten times ten thousand futile, fruitless battles this brawling, unreasonable people has fought; the saddest of distinctions to them among peoples.

At Dublin he met Gavan Duffy again; stayed several days; saw various notabilities—Petrie, the antiquarian, among others, whose high merit he at once recognised; declined an invitation from the Viceroy, and on the 8th (a Sunday), Dublin and the neighbourhood being done with, he started for the south. Kildare was his first stage.

Kildare, as I entered it, looked worse and worse—one of the wretchedest wild villages I ever saw, and full of ragged beggars: exotic, altogether like a village in Dahomey, man and church both. Knots of worshipping people hung about the streets, and everywhere round them hovered a harpy swarm of clamorous mendicants—men, women, children; a village winged, as if a flight of harpies had alighted on it. Here for the first time was Irish beggary itself.

In the railway 'a big blockhead sate with his

dirty feet on seat opposite, not stirring them for Carlyle, who wanted to sit there.' 'One thing we're all agreed on,' said he. 'We're very ill governed—Whig, Tory, Radical, Repealer, all admit we're very ill governed.' Carlyle thought to himself, 'Yes, indeed. You govern yourself. He that would govern you well would probably surprise you much, my friend, laying a hearty horsewhip on that back of yours.'

Owing to the magic companionship of Mr. Duffy, he met and talked freely with priests and patriots. Lord Monteagle's introductions secured him attention from the Anglo-Irish gentry. He was entertained at the Castle at Lismore, saw Waterford, Youghal, Castlemartyr, and then Cork, where he encountered 'one of the two sons of Adam who, sixteen years before, had encouraged Fraser, the bookseller, to go on with "Teufelsdröckh,"' a priest, a Father O'Shea, to whom for this at least he was grateful.

Killarney was the next stage; beauty and squalor there, as everywhere, sadly linked to one another. Near Killarney he stayed with Sir —— and his interesting wife; good people, but strong upholders of the Anglo-Irish Church, which, however great its merits otherwise, had made little of missionary work among the Catholic Celts. He wished well to all English institutions in Ireland, but he had a fixed conviction that the Anglo-Catholic Church at least, both there and everywhere, was unequal to its work. He went with his friends to the 'service,' which was 'decently performed.'

I felt (he says) how English Protestants, or the sons of such, might with zealous affection like to assemble here

once a week and remind themselves of English purities and decencies and Gospel ordinances, in the midst of a black, howling Babel of superstitious savagery, like Hebrews sitting by the streams of Babylon. But I felt more clearly than ever how impossible it was that an extraneous son of Adam, first seized by the terrible conviction that he had a soul to be saved or damned, that he must read the riddle of this universe or go to perdition everlasting, could for a moment think of taking this respectable 'performance' as the solution of the mystery for him. Oh heavens! never in this world! Weep by the stream of Babel, decent, clean English Irish; weep, for there is cause, till you can do something better than weep; but expect no Babylonian or any other mortal to concern himself with that affair of yours. . . . No sadder truth presses itself upon me than the necessity there will soon be, and the call there everywhere already is, to quit these old rubrics and give up these empty performances altogether. All religions that I fell in with in Ireland seemed to me too irreligious: really, in sad truth, doing mischief to the people instead of good.

Limerick, Clare, Lough Derg on the Shannon, Galway, Castlebar, Westport—these were the successive points of the journey. At Westport was a workhouse and 'human swinery at its acme;' 30,000 paupers out of a population of 60,000; 'an abomination of desolation.' Thence, through the dreariest parts of Mayo, he drove on to Ballina, where he found Forster, of Rawdon, waiting for him—W. E. Forster, then young and earnest, and eager to master in Carlyle's company the enigma which he took in hand as Chief Secretary three years ago (1881, &c.), with what success the world by this time knows. Carlyle, at least, is not responsible for the failure, certain as mathematics, of the Irish Land Act. Forster perhaps discovered at the time that he

would find little to suit him in Carlyle's views of the matter. They soon parted. Carlyle hastened on to Donegal to see a remarkable experiment which was then being attempted there. Lord George Hill was endeavouring to show at Gweedore that, with proper resources of intellect, energy, and money wisely expended, a section of Ireland could be lifted out of its misery even under the existing conditions of English administration.

His distinct conclusion was that this too, like all else of the kind, was building a house out of sand. He went to Gweedore ; he stayed with Lord George ; he saw all that he was doing or trying to do, and he perceived, with a clearness which the event has justified, that the persuasive charitable method of raising lost men out of the dirt and leading them of their own accord into the ways that they should go, was, in Ireland at least, doomed to fail from the beginning.

I had to repeat often to Lord George (he says), to which he could not refuse essential consent, his is the largest attempt at benevolence and beneficence on the modern system (the emancipation, all for liberty, abolition of capital punishment, roast goose at Christmas system) ever seen by me or like to be seen. Alas ! how can it prosper, except to the soul of the noble man himself who earnestly tries it and works at it, making himself a slave to it these seventeen years ?

It would be interesting to compare Carlyle's tour, or any modern tour, in Ireland, with Arthur Young's, something over a hundred years ago—before Grattan's constitution, the Volunteers, the glorious liberties of 1782, Catholic emancipation, and the rest that has followed. Carlyle found but one Lord George Hill

hopelessly struggling with impossibilities; Arthur Young found not one, but many peers and gentlemen working effectively in the face of English discouragement: draining, planting, building, making large districts, now all 'gone back to bog' again, habitable by human beings, and successfully accomplishing at least a part of the work which they were set to do. All that is not waste and wilderness in Ireland is really the work of these poor men.

From Gweedore to Derry was an easy journey. There his travels were to end; he was to find a steamer which would take him to Scotland. Five weeks had passed since he landed. On August 6 he met at breakfast a company of Derry citizens, who had come to hear the impression which these weeks had left upon him.

Emphatic talk to them, far too emphatic: human nerves being worn out with exasperation. Remedy for Ireland? To cease generally from following the Devil! No other remedy that I know of. One general life element of humbug these two centuries. And now it has fallen *bankrupt*. This universe, my worthy brothers, has its laws, terrible as death and judgment if we 'cant' ourselves away from following them. Land tenure? What is a landlord at this moment in any country if Rhadamanthus looked at him? What is an Archbishop? Alas! what is a Queen? What is a British specimen of the genus homo in these generations? A bundle of hearsays and authentic appetites—a canaille whom the gods are about to chastise and to extinguish if he cannot alter himself, &c.

Derry aristocrats behaved very well under all this. Not a pleasant breakfast; but, oh! it is the last.

This was Monday, August 6. On the 7th, Carlyle was in his own land again, having left the 'huge

suppuration' to suppurate more and more till it burst, he feeling that any true speech upon it would be like speaking to the deaf winds. On reaching Scotsbrig, he exclaimed:

Thank Heaven for the sight of real human industry, with human fruits from it, once more. The sight of fenced fields, weeded crops, and human creatures with whole clothes on their back—it was as if one had got into spring water out of dunghill puddles.

His wife had meanwhile gone to Scotland on her own account. She had spent three singularly interesting days at Haddington (which she has herself described [1]), where she wandered like a returned spirit about the home of her childhood. She had gone thence to her relations at Auchtertool, in Fife, and was there staying when her husband was at Gweedore. A characteristic letter of hers survives, written thence, which must have been omitted by accident in Carlyle's collection. It was to her brother-in-law John, and is in her liveliest style. John's translation of Dante's 'Inferno' was just out, and the family were busy reading it and talking about it.

To John Carlyle.

Auchtertool Manse: July 27, 1849.

We had been talking about you, and had sunk silent. Suddenly my uncle turned his head to me and said, shaking it gravely, 'He has made an awesome plooster o' that place.' 'Who? what place, uncle?' 'Whew! the place ye'll maybe gang to if ye dinna tak' care.' I really believe he considers all those circles of your invention.

Walter [2] performed the marriage service over a couple of

[1] *Letters and Memorials*, vol. ii. p. 53.
[2] A cousin just ordained.

colliers the day after I came. I happened to be in his study when they came in, and asked leave to remain. The man was a good-looking man enough, dreadfully agitated, partly with the business he was come on, partly with drink. He had evidently taken a glass too much to keep his heart up. The girl had one very large inflamed eye and one little one, which looked perfectly composed, while the large eye stared wildly and had a tear in it. Walter married them very well indeed; and his affecting words, together with the bridegroom's pale, excited face, and the bride's ugliness, and the poverty, penury, and want imprinted on the whole business, and above all fellow-feeling with the poor wretches then rushing on their fate—all that so overcame me that I fell crying as desperately as if I had been getting married to the collier myself, and, when the ceremony was over, extended my hand to the unfortunates, and actually (in such an enthusiasm of pity did I find myself) I presented the new husband with a snuff-box which I happened to have in my hand, being just about presenting it to Walter when the creatures came in. This unexpected *Himmelsendung* finished turning the man's head; he wrung my hand over and over, leaving his mark for some hours after, and ended his grateful speeches with 'Oh, Miss! Oh, Liddy! may ye hae mair comfort and pleasure in your life than ever you have had yet!' which might easily be.

Carlyle stayed quiet at Scotsbrig, meditating on the break-down of the proposed Irish book, and uncertain what he should turn to instead. He had promised to join the Ashburtons in the course of the autumn at a Highland shooting-box. Shooting parties were out of his line altogether, but perhaps he did not object to seeing for once what such a thing was like. Scotsbrig, too, was not agreeing with him.

Last night (he says in a letter thence) I awoke at three, and made nothing more of it, owing to cocks and other

blessed fellow-inhabitants of this planet, not all of whom are friendly to me, I perceive. In fact, this planet was not wholly made for me, but for me and others, including cocks, unclean things many, and even the Devil; that is the real secret of it. Alas! a human creature with these particularities in mere sleep, not to speak of any others, is he not a creature to be prayed for?

He remained there till the end of August, and then started on his expedition. Glen Truim, to which he was bound, was in the far North, in Macpherson of Clunie's country. The railroad was yet unfinished, and the journey—long and tedious—had to be transacted by coach. He was going against the grain. Perhaps his wife thought that he would have done more wisely to decline. He stopped on the way at Auchtertool to see her; 'had,' he says, 'a miserable enough hugger-mugger time; my own blame—none others so much;' 'saw that always.' Certainly, as the event proved, he would have been better off out of the way of the 'gunner bodies.' If he was miserable in Fife, he was far from happy with his grand friends in Glen Truim.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Glen Truim: September 2, 1849.

What can I do but write to you, even if I were not bound by the law of the wayfarer? It is my course whenever I am out of sorts or in low spirits among strangers; emphatically my case just now in this closet of a house, among rains and highland mosses, with a nervous system all 'dadded about' by coach travel, rail travel, multiplied confusion, and finally by an almost totally sleepless night. Happily, this closet *is* my own for the time being. Here is paper. Here are pens. I will tell my woes to poor Goody.

Well do I know that, in spite of prepossessions, she will have some pity of me. . . .

You may fancy what the route was. . . . The fat old landlord at Dunkeld, grown grey and much broader, was the only known living creature.[1] A still, olive-coloured mist hung over all the country. Kinnaird and the *old* house which was my sleeping-place when I used to write to you were greyly discernible across the river amid their trees. I thought of the waterhen you have heard me mention, of the pony I used to ride, of the whole world that then lived, dead now mostly, fallen silent for evermore, even as the poor Bullers are, and as we shall shortly be. Such reflections, when they do not issue pusillanimously, are as good as the sight of Michael Angelo's 'Last Judgment,' and deserve their place from time to time.

The journey to Invernessshire is detailed with copious minuteness. His eye always caught small details when they had meaning in them. The coach dropped him finally at the roadside, in sight of Glen Truim—'the house, a rather foolish-looking, turretted, diminutive, pretentious, grey granite sort of a place, half a mile off;' the country an undulated plain—a very broad valley with no high hill but one near by, 'bare for the rest, and by no means a Garden of Eden in any respect.' He continues:—

The gillie that was to wait for us was by no means waiting. He 'mistook the time.' Nothing but solitary, bare moor was waiting. I took the next cottage, left my goods there, walked; found nobody, as usual. In brief, oh, Goody, Goody! it was four o'clock before I actually found landlord; four and a half landlady; I walking all the while, with no refection but cigars: five before I could get hold of my luggage, and eight, after vain attempts at sleep

[1] Remembered from the time when he had been the Bullers' tutor, twenty-seven years before.

amidst noises as of a sacked city, before any nourishment, for which indeed I had no appetite at all, was ministered to me. From the hospitalities of the great world, even when kindly affected to us, good Lord deliver hooz! . . .

In fact, when I think of the Grange, and Bath House, and Addiscombe, and consider this wretched establishment, and 500*l.* for two months of it, I am lost in amazement. The house is not actually much beyond Craigenputtock —say two Craigenputtocks ill contrived and ill managed. Nor is the prospect in a higher ratio; and for society, really Corson,[1] except that he was not called Lord, and had occasionally 'his forehead all elevated into inequalities,' Corson, I say, was intrinsically equal to the average of 'gunner bodies.' Oh, Jeannie dear, when I think of our poverty even at the present, and see this *wealth*, which do you imagine I prefer? The two Lords we have here are a fat ——, a sensual, proud-looking man, of whom or his genesis or environment I know nothing, and then a small, leanish ——, neither of whom is worth a doit to me. Their wives are polite, elegant-looking women, but hardly beyond the —— range; not a better, though a haughtier. Poor Lord Ashburton looks rustic and healthy, but seems more absent and oblivious than ever. A few reasonable words with me seem as if suddenly to awaken him to surprised remembrance. Young Lord N. you know. Merchant B., really one of the sensiblest figures here, he and Miss Emily Baring make up the lot, and we are crammed like herrings in a barrel. The two lads are in one room. This apartment of mine, looking out towards Aberdeenshire and the brown, wavy moors, is of nine feet by seven: a French bed, and hot water not to be had for scarcity of jugs. I awoke after an hour and a quarter's sleep, and one of those Peers of the Realm snored audibly to me. . . In fact, it is rather clear I shall do no good here unless things alter exceedingly. I mean to petition to be off to the bothy[2] to-morrow, where at least will be some kind of silence. I must go, and will if I

[1] A farmer who lived near Craigenputtock.

[2] A lodge some miles distant.

miss another night of sleep and have to dine again at eight amidst talk of 'birds;' and, on the whole, as soon as I can get what little bit of duty I have discovered for myself to do here *done*, the sooner I cut cable or lift anchor for other latitudes, I decidedly find it will be the better. . . . Pity me when thou canst, poor little soul! or laugh at me if thou wilt. Oh! if you could read my heart and whole thought at this moment, there is surely one sad thing you would cease to do henceforth. But enough of all these sad *niaiseries*, which indeed I myself partly laugh at; for really I am wonderfully well to-day, and have this impregnable closet, with a window that pulls down, and the wide Highland moors before me worth looking at for once. And we shall get out of this adventure handsomely enough, if I miscalculate not, by-and-by. Milnes is to be here in a day or two, and these Lords of Parliament with their gunboxes and retinue are to go. We shall know shooting-boxes for the time to come.

The Ashburtons were as attentive to Carlyle's peculiarities as it was possible to be. No prince's confessor, in the ages of faith, could have more consideration shown him than he in this restricted mansion. The best apartment was made over to him as soon as it was vacant. A special dinner was arranged for him at his own hour. But he was out of his element.

September 7.

I have got a big waste room, and in spite of noises and turmoils contrive to get nightly in instalments some six hours of sleep. But on the whole my visit prospers as ill as could be wished. Double, double, toil and trouble!—that and nothing else at all. No reasonable word is heard, or hardly one, in the twenty-four hours. I cannot even get a washing-tub. My last attempt at washing was in a foot-pail, as unfit for it as a teacup would have been, and it brought on the lumbago. *Patientia!* I have known now what Highland shooting paradises are, and one experiment, I think, will be quite

enough. On the whole, I feel hourly there will be nothing for it but to get my visit *done* and fly across the hills again, *quam primum*. It is, in fact, such a scene of *folly* as no sane man could wish to continue in or return to. Oh, my wise little Goody! what a blessing in comparison with all the Peerage books and Eldorados in the world is a little solid sense derived from Heaven!

Poor 'shooting paradise'! It answered the purpose it was intended for. Work, even to the aristocracy, is exacting in these days. Pleasure is even more exacting; and unless they could rough it now and then in primitive fashion and artificial plainness of living, they would sink under the burden of their splendours and the weariness of their duties. Carlyle had no business in such a scene. He never fired off a gun in his life. He never lived in habitual luxury, and therefore could not enjoy the absence of common conveniences. He was out of humour with what he saw. He was out of humour with himself for being a part of it. Three weeks of solitude at Scotsbrig, to which he hastened to retreat, scarcely repaired his sufferings at Glen Truim.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Scotsbrig: September 17, 1849.

I am lazy beyond measure. I sleep and smoke, and would fain do nothing else at all. If they would but let me sit alone in this room, I think I should be tempted to stay long in it, forgetting and forgotten, so inexpressibly wearied is my poor body and poor soul. Ah me! People ought not to be angry at me. People ought to let me alone. Perhaps they would if they rightly understood what I was doing and suffering in this Life Pilgrimage at times; but they cannot, the good friendly souls! Ah me! or, rather: Courage! courage! The rough billows and cross winds shall not beat

us yet; not at this stage of the voyage, and harbour almost within sight. The fact is that just now I am very weary, and the more sleep I get I seem to grow the wearier. Yesterday I took a ride; the lanes all silent, fields full of stooks, and Burnswark and the everlasting hills looking quite clear upon me. Jog! jog! So went the little shelty at its own slow will; and death seemed to me almost all one with life, and eternity much the same as time.

[1] September 24.

Alas, my poor little Goody! These are not good times at all. . . . Your poor hand and heart, too, were in sad case on Friday. Let me hope you have well slept since that, given up 'thinking of the old 'un,' and much modified the 'Gummidge' view of affairs. Sickness and distraction of nerves is a good excuse for almost any degree of despondency. . . . But we can by no means permit ourselves a philosophy *à la* Gummidge—not at all, poor lone critturs though we be. In fact, there remains at all times and in all conceivable situations, short of Tophet itself, a set of quite infinite prizes for us to strive after—namely, of duties to do; and not till after they are done can we talk of retiring to the 'House.' Oh no! Give up that, I entreat you; for it is mere want of sleep and other unreality, I tell you. There has nothing changed in the heavens nor in the earth since times were much more tolerable than that. Poor thing! You are utterly worn out; and I hope a little, though I have no right properly, to get a letterkin to-morrow with a cheerier report of matters. Furthermore, I am coming home myself in some two days, and I reasonably calculate, not *un*reasonably according to all the light I have, that our life may be much more comfortable together than it has been for some years past. In me, if I can help it, there shall not be anything wanting for an issue so desirable, so indispensable in fact. If you will open your own eyes and shut your evil demon's imaginings and dreamings, I firmly believe all will soon be well. God grant it. Amen, amen! I love thee always, little as thou wilt believe it.

[1] In answer to a melancholy letter.

September 25.

For two nights past I have got into the bad habit of dividing my sleep in two; waking a couple of hours by way of interlude, and then sleeping till ten o'clock—a bad habit, if I could mend it; but who can? My two hours of waking pass in wondrous resuscitations and reviews of all manner of dead events, not quite unprofitably perhaps, and though sadly, not unpleasantly—sad as death, but also quiet as death, and with a faint reflex of sacred joy (if I could be worthy of it), like the light which is beyond death. No earthly fortune is very formidable to me, nor very desirable. A soul of something heavenly I do seem to see in every human life, and in my own too, and that is truly and for ever of importance to me. . . . Oh my dear little Jeannie!—for on the whole there is none of them all worth naming beside thee when thy better genius is not banished—try to sleep to compose thy poor little heart and nerves, to love me as of old, at least not to hate me. My heart is very weary, wayworn too with fifty-three rough years behind me: but it *is* bound to thee, poor soul! as I can never bind it to any other. Help me to lead well what of life may still remain, and I will be for ever grateful.—God bless you always.

T. CARLYLE.

The three months of holiday were thus spent—strange holidays. But a man carries his shadow clinging to him, and cannot part with it, except in a novel. He was now driven by accumulation of discontent to disburden his heart of its secretions. During the last two revolutionary years he had covered many sheets with his reflections. At the bottom of his whole nature lay abhorrence of falsehood. To see facts as they actually were, and, if that was impossible, at least to desire to see them, to be sincere with his own soul, and to speak to others exactly what he himself believed, was to him the

highest of all human duties. Therefore he detested cant with a perfect hatred. Cant was organised hypocrisy, the art of making things seem what they were not; an art so deadly that it killed the very souls of those who practised it, carrying them beyond the stage of conscious falsehood into a belief in their own illusions, and reducing them to the wretchedest of possible conditions, that of being sincerely insincere. With cant of this kind he saw all Europe, all America, overrun; but beyond all, his own England appeared to him to be drenched in cant—cant religious, cant political, cant moral, cant artistic, cant everywhere and in everything. A letter to Mr. Erskine, written before the French Revolution, shows what he was then thinking about it; and all that had happened since had wrought his conviction to whiter heat.

To Thomas Erskine, Linlathen.

June 12, 1847.

One is warned by Nature herself not to 'sit down by the side of sad thoughts,' as my friend Oliver has it, and dwell voluntarily with what is sorrowful and painful. Yet at the same time one has to say for oneself—at least I have—that all the *good* I ever got came to me rather in the shape of sorrow: that there is nothing noble or godlike in this world but has in it something of 'infinite sadness,' very different indeed from what the current moral philosophies represent it to us: and surely in a time like ours, if in any time, it is good for a man to be *driven*, were it by never such harsh methods, into looking at this great universe with his own eyes, for himself and not for another, and trying to adjust himself truly there. By the helps and traditions of others he never will adjust himself: others are but offering him their miserable spyglasses; Puseyite, Presbyterian, Free Kirk, old Jew, old Greek, middle-age Italian, imperfect, not

to say distorted, semi-opaque, wholly opaque and altogether melancholy and rejectable spyglasses, one and all, if one has *eyes* left. On me, too, the pressure of these things falls very heavy: indeed I often feel the loneliest of all the sons of Adam; and, in the jargon of poor grimacing men, it is as if one listened to the jabbering of spectres—not a cheerful situation at all while it lasts. In fact, I am quite *idle* so far as the outer hand goes at present. Silent, not from having nothing, but from having infinitely too much, to say: out of which perplexity I know no road except that of getting more and more miserable in it, till one is *forced* to say *something*, and so carry on the work a little. I must not complain. I must try to get my work done while the days and years are. Nay, is not that the thing I would, before all others, have chosen, had the universe and all its felicities been freely offered me to take my share from? The great soul of this world is *Just*. With a voice soft as the harmony of spheres, yet stronger, sterner, than all thunders, this message does now and then reach us through the hollow jargon of things. This great fact we live in, and were made by. It is 'a noble Spartan *Mother*' to all of us that dare be sons to it. Courage! we must not quit our shields; we must return home *upon* our shields, having fought in the battle till we died. That is verily the law. Many a time I remember that of Dante, the inscription on the gate of hell: 'Eternal *love* made me'—made even *me*; a word which the paltry generations of this time shriek over, and do not in the least understand. I confess their 'Exeter Hall,' with its froth oceans, benevolence, &c. &c., seems to me amongst the most degraded platitudes this world ever saw; a more brutal idolatry perhaps—for they are white men, and their century is the nineteenth—than that of Mumbo Jumbo itself! This, you perceive, is strong talking. This I have got to say yet, or try what I can do toward saying if I live. From Dan to Beersheba I find the same most mournful fact written down for me; mutely calling on me to read it and speak it abroad if I be not a lazy coward and slave, which I would fain avoid being. . . . It is every way very strange to consider what

'Christianity,' so called, has grown to within these two centuries, on the Howard and Fry side as on every other—a paltry, mealy-mouthed 'religion of cowards,' who can have no religion but a sham one, which also, as I believe, awaits its 'abolition' from the avenging power. If men will turn away their face from God, and set up idols, temporary phantasms, instead of the *Eternal One*—alas! the consequences are from of old well known.

Religion, a religion that was true, meant a rule of conduct according to the law of God. Religion, as it existed in England, had become a thing of opinion, of emotion flowing over into benevolence as an imagined substitute for justice. Over the conduct of men in their ordinary business it had ceased to operate at all, and therefore, to Carlyle, it was a hollow appearance, a word without force or controlling power in it. Religion was obligation, a command which bound men to duty, as something which they were compelled to do under tremendous penalties. The modern world, even the religious part of it, had supposed that the grand aim was to abolish compulsion, to establish universal freedom, leaving each man to the light of his own conscience or his own will. Freedom—that was the word—the glorious birthright which, once realised, was to turn earth into paradise. And this was cant; and those who were loudest about it could not themselves believe it, but could only pretend to believe it. In a conditioned existence like ours, freedom was impossible. To the race as a race, the alternative was work or starvation—all were bound to work in their several ways; some must work or all would die; and the result of the boasted political liberty was an arrangement where the cunning or the strong appropriated the lion's share of the harvest

without working, while the multitude lived on by toil, and toiled to get the means of living. That was the actual outcome of the doctrine of liberty, as seen in existing society; nor in fact to any kind of man anywhere was freedom possible in the popular sense of the word. Each one of us was compassed round with restrictions on his personal will, and the wills even of the strongest were slaves to inclination. The serf whose visible fetters were struck off was a serf still under the law of nature. He might change his master, but a master he must have of some kind, or die; and to speak of 'emancipation' in and by itself, as any mighty gain or step in progress, was the wildest of illusions. No 'progress' would or could be made on the lines of Radicals or philanthropists. The 'liberty,' the only liberty, attainable by the multitude of ignorant mortals, was in being guided or else compelled by some one wiser than themselves. They gained nothing if they exchanged the bondage to man for bondage to the devil. It was assumed in the talk of the day that 'emancipation' created manliness, self-respect, improvement of character.[1] To Carlyle, who looked at facts, all this

[1] Mr. Gladstone somewhere quotes Homer in support of this argument.

ἥμισυ γάρ τ' ἀρετῆς ἀποαίνυται εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς
ἀνέρος, εὖτ' ἄν μιν κατὰ δούλιον ἦμαρ ἕλῃσιν.

'Jove strips a man of half his virtue on the day when slavery lays hold on him.' Homer, be it observed, places these words in the mouth of Eumæus, who was himself a slave. Eumæus and another slave were alone found faithful to their king when the free citizens of Ithaca had forgotten him. Eumæus was speaking of the valets left at home in their master's absence. The free valets in a modern house left in similar circumstances would probably have not been very superior to them.

was wind. Those 'grinders,' for instance, whom he had seen in that Manchester cellar, earning high wages, that they might live merrily for a year or two, and die at the end of them—were they improved? Was freedom to kill themselves for drink such a blessed thing? Were they really better off than slaves who were at least as well cared for as their master's cattle? The cant on this subject enraged him. He, starting from the other *pole*, believing not in the rights of man, but in the duties of man, could see nothing in it but detestable selfishness disguised in the plumage of angels—a shameful substitute for the neglect of the human ties by which man was bound to man. '*Facit indignatio versum.*' Wrath with the things which he saw around him inspired the Roman poet; wrath drove Carlyle into writing the 'Latter-day Pamphlets.'

Journal.

November 11, 1849.—Went to Ireland—wandered about there all through July, have half forcibly recalled all my remembrances, and thrown them down on a paper since my return. Ugly spectacle, sad health, sad humour, a thing unjoyful to look back upon. The whole country figures in my mind like a ragged coat or huge beggar's gaberdine, not patched or patchable any longer; far from a joyful or beautiful spectacle. Went afterwards from Annandale to the Highlands as far as Glen Truim; spent there ten wretched days. To Annandale a second time, and thence home after a fortnight, leaving my poor mother ill of a face cold, from which she is not yet quite entirely recovered. The last glimpses of her at the door, whither she had followed me, contrary to bargain; these are things that lie beyond speech. How lonely I am now grown in the world; how hard, many

times as if I were made of stone! All the old tremulous affection lies in me, but it is as if frozen. So mocked, and scourged, and driven mad by contradictions, it has, as it were, lain down in a kind of iron sleep. The general history of man? Somewhat, I suppose, and yet not wholly. Words cannot express the love and sorrow of my old memories, chiefly out of boyhood, as they occasionally rise upon me, and I have now no voice for them at all. One's heart becomes a grim Hades, peopled only with silent preternaturalism. No more of this! God help me! God soften me again—so far as now softness can be suitable for such a soul; or rather let me pray for *wisdom*, for silent capability to manage this huge haggard world—at once a Hades and an Elysium, a celestial and infernal as I see, which has been given me to inhabit for a time and to rule over as I can. No lonelier soul, I do believe, lies under the sky at this moment than myself. Masses of written stuff, which I grudge a little to burn, and trying to sort something out of them for magazine articles, series of pamphlets, or whatever they will promise to turn to—does not yet succeed with me at all: am not yet in the 'paroxysm of clairvoyance' which is indispensable. Is it? All these paper bundles were written last summer, and are wrongish, every word of them. Might serve as newspaper or pamphletary introduction, overture, or accompaniment to the unnameable book I have to write. In dissent from all the world; in black contradiction, deep as the bases of my life, to all the philanthropic, emancipatory, constitutional, and other anarchic revolutionary jargon, with which the world, so far as I can conceive, is now full. Alas! and the governors of the world are as anarchic as anybody (witness the Canada Parliament and governor just now, witness, &c. &c., all over the world); not pleasing at all to be in a minority of one in regard to everything. The worst is, however, I am not yet true to myself; I cannot yet call in my wandering truant being, and bid it wholly set to the work fit for *it* in this hour. Oh, let me persist, persist—may the heavens grant me power to persist in that till I do succeed in it!

November 16, 1849.—A sad feature in employments like mine, that you cannot carry them on continuously. My work needs all to be done with my nerves in a kind of blaze; such a state of soul and body as would soon *kill* me, if not intermitted. I have to rest accordingly; to stop and sink into total collapse, the getting out of which again is a labour of labours. Papers on the 'Negro Question,' fraction of said rubbish coming out in the next 'Fraser.'

A paper on the Negro or Nigger question, properly the first of the 'Latter-day Pamphlets,' was Carlyle's declaration of war against modern Radicalism. Hitherto, though his orthodoxy was questionable, the Radicals had been glad to claim him as belonging to them; and if Radicalism meant an opinion that modern society required to be reconstituted from the root, he had been, was, and remained the most thoroughgoing of them all. His objection was to the cant of Radicalism; the philosophy of it, 'bred of philanthropy and the Dismal Science,' the purport of which was to cast the atoms of human society adrift, mocked with the name of liberty, to sink or swim as they could. Negro emancipation had been the special boast and glory of the new theory of universal happiness. The twenty millions of indemnity and the free West Indies had been chanted and celebrated for a quarter of a century from press and platform. Weekly, almost daily, the English newspapers were crowing over the Americans, flinging in their teeth the Declaration of Independence, blowing up in America itself a flame which was ripening towards a furious war, while the result of the experiment so far had been the material ruin of colonies once the most precious that we had, and the

moral ruin of the blacks themselves, who were rotting away in sensuous idleness amidst the wrecks of the plantations. He was touching the shield with the point of his lance when he chose this sacredly sensitive subject for his first onslaught. He did not mean that the 'Niggers' should have been kept as cattle, and sold as cattle at their owners' pleasure. He did mean that they ought to have been treated as human beings, for whose souls and bodies the whites were responsible; that they should have been placed in a position suited to their capacity, like that of the English serf under the Plantagenets; protected against ill-usage by law; attached to the soil; not allowed to be idle, but cared for themselves, their wives and their children, in health, in sickness, and in old age.

He said all this; but he said it fiercely, scornfully, in the tone which could least conciliate attention. Black Quashee and his friends were spattered with ridicule which stung the more from the justice of it. The following passage could least be pardoned because the truth which it contained could least be denied:—

> Dead corpses, the rotting body of a brother man, whom fate or unjust men have killed, this is not a pleasant spectacle. But what say you to the dead *soul* of a man in a body which still pretends to be vigorously alive, and can drink rum? An idle white gentleman is not pleasant to me, but what say you to an idle black gentleman with his rum bottle in his hand (for a little additional pumpkin you can have red herrings and rum in Demerara), no breeches on his body, pumpkin at discretion, and the fruitfullest region of the earth going back to jungle round him? Such things the sun looks down upon in our fine times, and I for one

would rather have no hand in them. . . . Yes—this is the eternal law of nature for a man, my beneficent Exeter Hall friends; this, that he shall be permitted, encouraged, and, if need be, compelled to do what work the Maker of him has intended for this world. Not that he should eat pumpkin with never such felicity in the West India Islands, is or can be the blessedness of our black friend; but that he should do useful work there, according as the gifts have been bestowed on him for that. And his own happiness and that of others round him will alone be possible by his and their getting into such a relation that this can be permitted him, and in case of need that this can be compelled him. I beg you to understand this, for you seem to have a little forgotten it; and there lie a thousand influences in it not quite useless for Exeter Hall at present. The idle black man in the West Indies had not long since the right, and will again, under better form, if it please Heaven, have the right—actually the first 'right of man' for an indolent person—to be compelled to work as he was fit, and to do the Maker's will who had constructed him with such and such capabilities and prefigurements of capability. And I incessantly pray Heaven that all men, the whitest alike and the blackest, the richest and the poorest, had attained precisely the same right, the Divine right of being compelled (if 'permitted' will not answer) to do what work they are appointed for, and not to go idle another minute in a life which is so short, and where idleness so soon runs to putrescence. Alas! we had then a perfect world, and the Millennium, and the 'organisation of labour' and reign of complete blessedness for all workers and men had then arrived, which in their own poor districts of this planet, as we all lament to know, it is very far from having got done.

I once asked Carlyle if he had ever thought of going into Parliament, for I knew that the opportunity must have been offered him. 'Well,' he said, 'I did think of it at the time of the "Latter-day Pamphlets." I felt that nothing could prevent me from getting

up in the House and saying all that.' He was powerful, but he was not powerful *enough* to have discharged with his single voice the vast volume of conventional electricity with which the collective wisdom of the nation was, and remains, charged. It is better that his thoughts should have been committed to enduring print, where they remain to be reviewed hereafter by the light of fact.

The article on the 'Nigger question' gave, as might have been expected, universal offence. Many of his old admirers drew back after this, and 'walked no more with him.' John Mill replied fiercely in the same magazine. They had long ceased to be intimate; they were henceforth 'rent asunder,' not to be again united. Each went his own course; but neither Mill nor Carlyle forgot that they had once been friends, and each to the last spoke of the other with affectionate regret.

The Pamphlets commenced at the beginning of 1850, and went on month after month, each separately published, no magazine daring to become responsible for them. The first was on 'The Present Time,' on the advent and prospects of Democracy. The revolutions of 1848 had been the bankruptcy of falsehood, 'the tumbling out of impostures into the street.' The problem left before the world was how nations were hereafter to be governed. The English people imagined that it could be done by 'suffrages' and the ballot-box; a system under which St. Paul and Judas Iscariot would each have an equal vote, and one would have as much power as the other. This was like saying that when a ship was going on a voyage round the world the crew were to be brought

together to elect their own officers, and vote the course which was to be followed.

Unanimity on board ship—yes indeed, the ship's crew may be very unanimous, which doubtless for the time being will be very comfortable for the ship's crew, and to their phantasm captain, if they have one. But if the tack they unanimously steer upon is guiding them into the belly of the abyss, it will not profit them much. Ships accordingly do not use the ballot-box, and they reject the phantasm species of captains. One wishes much some other entities, *since all entities lie under the same rigorous set of laws*, could be brought to show as much wisdom and sense at least of self-preservation, the first command of nature.

The words in italics contain the essence of Carlyle's teaching. If they are true, the inference is equally true that in Democracy there can be no finality. If the laws are fixed under which nations are allowed to prosper, men fittest by capacity and experience to read those laws must be placed in command, and the ballot-box never will and never can select the fittest; it will select the *sham* fittest, or the *un*fittest. The suffrage, the right of every man to a voice in the selection of his rulers, was, and is, the first article of the Radical Magna Charta, the *articulus stantis vel cadentis Reipublicæ*, and is so accepted by every modern Liberal statesman. Carlyle met it with a denial as complete and scornful as Luther flung at Tetzel and his Indulgences—not, however, with the same approval from those whom he addressed. Luther found the grass dry and ready to kindle. The belief which Carlyle assailed was alive and green with hope and vigour.

Journal.

February 7, 1850.—Trying to write my 'Latter-day Pamphlets.' Such form, after infinite haggling, has the thing now assumed. Some twelve pamphlets, if I can but get them written at all; then leave the matter lying. No. 1 came out a week ago; yields me a most confused response. Little save *abuse* hitherto, and the sale reported to be *vigorous*. Abuse enough, and almost that only, is what I have to look for with confidence. Nigger article has roused the ire of all philanthropists to a quite unexpected pitch. Among other very poor attacks on it was one in 'Fraser;' most shrill, thin, poor and insignificant, which I was surprised to learn proceeded from John Mill. . . . He has neither told me nor reminded me of anything that I did not very well know beforehand. No use in writing that kind of criticism. For some years back Mill, who once volunteered a close constant intimacy for a long time, has volunteered a complete withdrawal of himself; and now, instead of reverent discipleship, which he aspired to, seems to have taken the function of getting up to contradict whatever I say. Curious enough. But poor Mill's fate in various ways has been very tragic. His misery, when I chance to see him in the street or otherwise (for we never had a word of quarrel), appeals to my pity if any anger was rising. . . . The Pamphlets are all as bad as need be. If I could but get my meaning explained at all, I should care little in what style it was. But my state of health and heart is highly unfavourable. Nay, worst of all, a kind of stony *indifference* is spreading over me. I am getting *weary* of suffering, feel as if I could sit down in it and say, 'Well, then, I shall soon die at any rate.' Truly all human things, fames, promotions, pleasures, prosperities, seem to me inexpressibly *contemptible* at times.

The second pamphlet, on 'Model Prisons,' was as savage as the first. Society, conscious at heart that it was itself unjust, and did not mean to mend itself, was developing out of its uneasiness a universal 'Scoundrel

Protection' sentiment. Society was concluding that inequalities of condition were inevitable; that those who suffered under them, and rebelled, could not fairly be punished, but were to be looked upon as misguided brethren suffering under mental disorders, to be cured in moral hospitals, called by euphemism Houses of Correction. 'Pity for human calamity,' the pamphlet said, 'was very beautiful, but the deep oblivion of the law of right and wrong, the indiscriminate mashing up of right and wrong into a patent treacle, was not beautiful at all.'

Wishing to see the system at work with his own eyes, Carlyle had visited the Millbank Penitentiary. He found 1,200 prisoners, 'notable murderesses among them,' in airy apartments of perfect cleanliness, comfortably warmed and clothed, quietly, and not too severely, picking oakum; their diet, bread, soup, meat, all superlatively excellent. He saw a literary Chartist rebel in a private court, master of his own time and spiritual resources; and he felt that 'he himself, so left with paper, ink, and all taxes and botherations shut out from him, could have written such a book as no reader would ever get from him.' He looked at felon after felon. He saw 'ape faces, imp faces, angry dog faces, heavy sullen ox faces, degraded underfoot perverse creatures, sons of greedy mutinous darkness.' To give the owners of such faces their 'due' could be attempted only where there was an effort to give every one his due, and to be fair all round; and as this was not to be thought of, 'they were to be reclaimed by the method of love.' 'Hopeless for evermore such a project.' And these fine hospitals were maintained by rates levied on the

honest outside, who were struggling to support themselves without becoming felons—'rates on the poor servants of God and Her Majesty, who were still trying to serve both, to boil right soup for the Devil's declared elect.'

He did not expect that his protests would be attended to then, but in twenty years he thought there might be more agreement with him. This, like many other prophecies of his, has proved true. We hang and flog now with small outcry and small compunction. But the ferocity with which he struck right and left at honoured names, the contempt which he heaped on an amiable, if not a wise experiment, gave an impression of his own character as false as it was unpleasant. He was really the most tender-hearted of men. His savageness was but affection turned sour, and what he said was the opposite of what he did. Many a time I have remonstrated when I saw him give a shilling to some wretch with 'Devil's elect' on his forehead. 'No doubt he is a son of Gehenna,' Carlyle would say; 'but you can see it is very low water with him. This modern life hardens our hearts more than it should.'

On the Pamphlets rushed. The third was on 'Downing Street and Modern Government.' Lord John Russell, I remember, plaintively spoke of it in the House of Commons. The fourth was on a 'New Downing Street, such as it might and ought to become.' The fifth, on 'Stump Oratory,' was perhaps the most important of the set, for it touched a problem of moment then, and now every day becoming of greater moment; for the necessary tendency of Democracy is to throw the power of the State into the hands of eloquent speakers, and eloquent speakers have never since the

world began been wise statesmen. Carlyle had not read Aristotle's 'Politics,' but he had arrived in his own road at Aristotle's conclusions. All forms of government, Aristotle says, are ruined by parasites and flatterers. The parasite of the monarch is the favourite who flatters his vanity and hides the truth from him. The parasite of a democracy is the orator; the people are his masters, and he rules by pleasing them. He dares not tell them unpleasant truths, lest he lose his popularity; he must call their passions emotions of justice, and their prejudices conclusions of reason. He dares not look facts in the face, and facts prove too strong for him. To the end of his life Carlyle thought with extreme anxiety on this subject, and, as will be seen, had more to say about it.

I need not follow the Pamphlets in detail. There were to have been twelve originally; one, I think, on the 'Exodus from Houndsditch,' for he occasionally reproached himself afterwards for over-reticence on that subject. He was not likely to have been deterred by fear of giving offence. But the arguments against speaking out about it were always as present with him as the arguments for openness. Perhaps he concluded, on the whole, that the good which he might do would not outbalance the pain he would inflict. The series, at any rate, ended with the eighth—upon 'Jesuitism,' a word to which he gave a wider significance than technically belongs to it. England supposed that it had repudiated sufficiently Ignatius Loyola and the Company of Jesus; but, little as England knew it, Ignatius's peculiar doctrines had gone into its heart, and were pouring through all its veins

and arteries. Jesuitism to Carlyle was the deliberate shutting of the eyes to truth; the deliberate insincerity which, if persisted in, becomes itself sincere. You choose to tell a lie because, for various reasons, it is convenient; you defend it with argument—till at length you are given over to believe it—and the religious side of your mind being thus penally paralysed; morality becomes talk and conscience becomes emotion; and your actual life has no authoritative guide left but personal selfishness. Thus, by the side of a profession of Christianity, England had adopted for a working creed Political Economy, which is the contradictory of Christianity, imagining that it could believe both together. Christianity tells us that we are not to care for the things of the earth. Political economy is concerned with nothing else. Christianity says that the desire to make money is the root of all evil. Political economy says that the more each man struggles to 'make money' the better for the commonwealth. Christianity says that it is the business of the magistrate to execute justice and maintain truth. Political economy (or the system of government founded upon it) limits 'justice' to the keeping of the peace, declares that the magistrate has nothing to do with maintaining *truth*, and that every man must be left free to hold his own opinions and advance his own interests in any way that he pleases, short of fraud and violence.

Jesuitism, or the art of finding reasons for whatever we wish to believe, had enabled Englishmen to persuade themselves that both these theories of life could be true at the same time. They kept one for Sundays, the other for the working days; and the

practical moral code thus evolved, Carlyle throws out in a wild freak of humour, comparable only to the memorable epitaph on the famous Baron in 'Sartor Resartus.' It is placed in the mouth of his imaginary friend, Sauerteig, who is generally responsible for every extravagant utterance.

Pig Philosophy.

If the inestimable talent of literature should, in these swift days of progress, be extended to the brute creation, having fairly taken in all the human, so that swine and oxen could communicate to us on paper what they thought of the universe, then might curious results, not uninstructive to some of us, ensue. Supposing swine (I mean four-footed swine) of sensibility and superior logical parts had attained such culture, and could, after survey and reflection, jot down for us their notion of the universe and of their interests and duties there, might it not well interest a discerning public, perhaps in unexpected ways, and give a stimulus to the languishing book trade? The votes of all creatures, it is understood at present, ought to be had, that you may legislate for them with better insight. 'How can you govern a thing,' say many, 'without first asking its vote?' Unless, indeed, you already chance to know its vote, and even something more—namely, what you are to think of its vote, what *it* wants by its vote, and, still more important, what Nature wants, which latter at the end of the account is the only thing that will be got. Pig propositions in a vague form are somewhat as follows:—

1. The universe, so far as sane conjecture can go, is an immeasurable swine's trough, consisting of solid and liquid and of other contrasts and kinds; especially consisting of attainable and unattainable, the latter in immensely greater quantities for most pigs.

2. Moral evil is unattainability of pig's wash; moral good, attainability of ditto.

3. What is Paradise or the State of Innocence? Para-

dise, called also State of Innocence, Age of Gold, and other names, was (according to pigs of weak judgment) unlimited attainability of pig's wash; perfect fulfilment of one's wishes, so that pigs' imagination could not outrun reality: a fable and an impossibility, as pigs of sense now see.

4. Define the whole duty of pigs. It is the mission of universal pighood to diminish the quantity of unattainable, and increase that of attainable. All knowledge and desire and effort ought to be directed thither, and thither only. Pig science, pig enthusiasm and devotion have this one aim. It is the whole duty of pigs.

5. Pig poetry ought to consist of universal recognition of the excellence of pig's wash and ground barley, and the felicity of pigs whose trough is in order, and who have had enough. Hrumph!

6. The pig knows the weather. He ought to look out what kind of weather it will be.

7. Who made the pig? Unknown. Perhaps the pork-butcher.

8. Have you law and justice in Pigdom? Pigs of observation have discerned that there is, or was once supposed to be, a thing called justice. Undeniably, at least there is a sentiment in pig nature called indignation, revenge, &c., &c., which, if one pig provoke another, comes out in a more or less destructive manner; hence laws are necessary—amazing quantities of laws. For quarrelling is attended with loss of blood, of life—at any rate, with frightful effusion of the general stock of hog's wash, and ruin, temporary ruin, to large sections of the universal swine's trough. Wherefore let justice be observed, so that quarrelling be avoided.

9. What is justice? Your own share of the general swine's trough; not any portion of my share.

10. But what is 'my share'? Ah! there, in fact, lies the grand difficulty, upon which pig science, meditating this long while, can settle absolutely nothing. My share! Hrumph! my share is, on the whole, whatever I can contrive to get without being hanged or sent to the hulks.

For there are gibbets, treadmills, I need not tell you, and rules which lawyers have prescribed.

11. Who are lawyers? Servants of God, appointed revealers of the oracles of God, who read off to us from day to day what is the eternal commandment of God in reference to the mutual claims of His creatures in this world.

12. Where do they find that written? In Coke upon Littleton.

13. Who made Coke? Unknown. The maker of Coke's wig is discoverable.

What became of Coke? Died. And then? Went to the undertakers. Went to the —— But we must pull up. Sauerteig's fierce humour, confounding even farther in his haste the four-footed with the two-footed animal, rushes into wilder and wilder forms of satirical torch-dancing, and threatens to end in a universal Rape of the Wigs, which, in a person of his character, looks ominous and dangerous. Here, for example, is his 51st proposition, as he calls it:—

51. What are Bishops? Overseers of souls.

What is a soul? The thing that keeps the body alive.

How do they oversee that? They tie on a kind of aprons, publish charges—I believe they pray dreadfully—macerate themselves nearly dead with continued grief that they cannot in the least oversee it.

'And are much honoured?' By the wise, very much.

52. 'Define the Church.' I had rather not.

'Do you believe in a future state?' Yes, surely.

'What is it?' Heaven, so called.

'To everybody?' I understand so—hope so.

'What is it thought to be?' Hrumph!

'No Hell, then, at all?' Hrumph!

This was written thirty-three years ago, when political economy was our sovereign political science. As the centre of gravity of political power has changed, the science has changed along with it. Statesmen have discovered that *laissez-faire*, though doubtless true in a better state of existence, is inap-

plicable to our imperfect planet. They have attempted, with Irish Land Bills, &c., to regulate in some degree the distribution of the hog's wash, and will doubtless, as democracy extends, do more in that direction. But when the Pamphlets appeared, this and the other doctrines enunciated in them were received with astonished indignation. 'Carlyle taken to whisky' was the popular impression; or perhaps he had gone mad. 'Punch,' the most friendly to him of all the London periodicals, protested affectionately. The delinquent was brought up for trial before him, I think for injuring his reputation. He was admonished, but stood impenitent, and even 'called the worthy magistrate a windbag and a sham.' I suppose it was Thackeray who wrote this, or some other kind friend, who feared, like Emerson, 'that the world would turn its back on him.' He was under no illusion himself as to the effect which he was producing.

To John Carlyle.

April 29, 1850.

The barking babble of the world continues in regard to these Pamphlets, hardly any wise word at all reaching me in reference to them; but I must say out my say in one shape or another, and will, if Heaven help me, not minding that at all. The world is not here for my objects. The world is here for its own; but let me too be here for my own. No *human* word, or hardly any, once in the month, is uttered to me by any fellow-mortal—a state of things I have long bewailed, but learn ever better to endure, and silently draw inferences from.

The prettiest personal feature during the appearance of the Pamphlets was a small excursion

for 'a day in the country,' which Carlyle and his wife made together, when the seventh, on Hudson's statue, was off his hands. They went by rail to Richmond on a bright May morning, and thence by omnibus to Ham Common, where they strolled about among the trees and the gorse. They had their luncheon with them in the shape of a packet of biscuits. They bought a single bottle of soda-water. He had his cigar-case and a match-box. It was like the old days at Craigenputtock, when, after an article was finished, they used to drive off together in the ancient gig for a holiday, with the tobacco-pipe in a pocket of the apron.

The last Pamphlet appeared in July.

'Latter-day Pamphlets' (he says) either dead or else abused and execrated by all mortals—*non flocci facio*, comparatively speaking. Had a letter from Emerson explaining that I was quite wrong to get so angry, &c. I really value these savage utterances of mine at nothing. I am glad only —and this is an inalienable benefit—that they are out of me. Stump orator, Parliament, Jesuitism, &c., were and are a real deliverance to me.

The outcry, curiously, had no effect on the sale of Carlyle's works. He had a certain public, slowly growing, which bought everything that he published. The praise of the newspapers never, he told me, sensibly increased the circulation; their blame never sensibly diminished it. His unknown disciples believed in him as a teacher whom they were to learn from, not to criticise. There were then about three thousand who bought his books. Now, who can say how many there are? He, for himself, had delivered his soul, and was comparatively at rest.

I am not so heavy-laden to-day (he writes, when it was over) as I have been for many a day. I have money enough (no beggarly terrors about finance now at all). I have still some strength, the chance of some years of time. If I be true to myself, how can the whole posterity of Adam, and its united follies and miseries, quite make shipwreck of me?

The relief, as might be expected, was not of very long continuance.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A.D. 1850. ÆT. 55–56.

Reaction from 'Latter-day Pamphlets'—Acquaintance with Sir Robert Peel—Dinner in Whitehall Place—Ball at Bath House—Peel's death—Estimate of Peel's character—Visit to South Wales—Savage Landor—Merthyr Tydvil—Scotsbrig—Despondency—Visits to Keswick and Coniston—The Grange—Return to London.

In the intervals between Carlyle's larger works, a discharge of spiritual bile was always necessary. Modern English life, and the opinions popularly current among men, were a constant provocation to him. The one object of everyone (a very few chosen souls excepted) seemed to be to make money, and with money increase his own idle luxury. The talk of people, whether written or spoken, was an extravagant and never-ceasing laudation of an age which was content to be so employed, as if the like of it had never been seen upon earth before. The thinkers in their closets, the politicians on platform or in Parliament, reviews and magazines, weekly newspapers and dailies, sang all the same note, that there had never since the world began been a time when the English part of mankind had been happier or better than they were then. They had only to be let alone, to have more and more liberty, and fix their eyes

steadily on 'increasing the quantity of attainable hog's wash,' and there would be such a world as no philosophy had ever dreamt of. Something of this kind really was the prevalent creed thirty years ago, under the sudden increase of wealth which set in with railways and free trade; and to Carlyle it appeared a false creed throughout, from principle to inference. In his judgment the common weal of men and nations depended on their characters; and the road which we had to travel, if we were to make a good end, was the same as the Christian pilgrim had travelled on his way to the Celestial City, no primrose path thither having been yet made by God or man. The austerer virtues—manliness, thrift, simplicity, self-denial—were dispensed with in the boasted progress. There was no demand for these, no need of them. The heaven aspired after was enjoyment, and the passport thither was only money. Let there be only money enough, and the gate lay open. He could not believe the doctrine. He abhorred it from the bottom of his soul. Such a heaven was no heaven for a *man*. The boasted prosperity would sooner or later be overtaken by 'God's judgment.' Especially he was angry when he saw men to whom nature had given talents lending themselves to this accursed persuasion; statesmen, theologians, philosophers composedly swimming with the stream, careless of truth, or with no longer any measure of truth except their own advantage. Some who had eyes were afraid to open them; others, and the most, had deliberately extinguished their eyes. They used their faculties only to dress the popular theories in plausible language, and were carried away by their own eloquence, till they actually believed

what they were saying. Respect for fact they had none. Fact to them was the view of things conventionally received, or what the world and they together agreed to admit.

That the facts either of religion or politics were *not* such as bishops and statesmen represented them to be, was frightfully evident to Carlyle, and he could not be silent if he wished. Thus, after he had written the 'French Revolution,' 'Chartism' had to come out of him, and 'Past and Present,' before he could settle to 'Cromwell.' 'Cromwell' done, the fierce acid had accumulated again and had been discharged in the 'Latter-day Pamphlets'—discharged, however, still imperfectly, for his whole soul was loaded with bilious indignation. Many an evening, about this time, I heard him flinging off the matter intended for the rest of the series which had been left unwritten, pouring out, for hours together, a torrent of sulphurous denunciation. No one could check him. If anyone tried contradiction, the cataract rose against the obstacle till it rushed over it and drowned it. But, in general, his listeners sate silent. The imagery, his wild play of humour, the immense knowledge always evident in the grotesque forms which it assumed, were in themselves so dazzling and so entertaining, that we lost the use of our own faculties till it was over. He did not like making these displays, and avoided them when he could; but he was easily provoked, and when excited could not restrain himself. Whether he expected to make converts by the Pamphlets, I cannot say. His sentences, perhaps, fell here and there like seeds, and grew to something in minds that could receive them. In the general hostility, he was

experiencing the invariable fate of all men who see what is coming before those who are about them see it; and he lived to see most of the unpalatable doctrines which the Pamphlets contained verified by painful experience and practically acted on.

In the midst of the storm which he had raised, he was surprised agreeably by an invitation to dine with Sir Robert Peel. He had liked Peel ever since he had met him at Lord Ashburton's. Peel, who had read his books, had been struck equally with him, and wished to know more of him. The dinner was in the second week of May. The ostensible object was to bring about a meeting between Carlyle and Prescott. The account of it is in his Journal.

There was a great party, Prescott, Milman, Barry (architect), Lord Mahon, Sheil, Gibson (sculptor), Cubitt (builder), &c., &c. About Prescott I cared little, and indeed, there or elsewhere, did not speak with him at all; but what I noted of Peel I will now put down. I was the second that entered the big drawing-room, a picture gallery as well, which looks out over the Thames (Whitehall Gardens, second house to the eastward of Montague House), commands Westminster Bridge too, with its wrecked parapets (old Westminster Bridge), and the new Parliament Houses, being, I fancy, of *semicircular* figure in that part and projecting into the shore of the river. Old Cubitt, a hoary, modest, sensible-looking man, was alone with Peel when I entered. My reception was abundantly cordial. Talk went on about the new Houses of Parliament, and the impossibility or difficulty of hearing in them—others entering, Milman &c., joined in it as I had done. Sir Robert, in his mild kindly voice, talked of the difficulties architects had in making out that part of their problem. Nobody then knew how it was to be done: *filling* of a room with people sometimes made it audible (witness his own experience at Glasgow in the College Rector's time, which he briefly mentioned to us),

sometimes it had been managed by hanging up cloth curtains &c. Joseph Hume, reporting from certain Edinburgh mathematicians, had stated that the best big room for being heard in, that was known in England, was a Quakers' meeting-house near Cheltenham. I have forgot the precise place.

People now came in thick and rapid. I went about the gallery with those already come, and saw little more of Sir Robert then. I remember in presenting Barry to Prescott he said with kindly emphasis, 'I have wished to show you some of our most distinguished men: allow me to introduce,' &c. Barry had been getting rebuked in the House of Commons in those very days or hours, and had been defended there by Sir Robert. Barry, when I looked at him, did not turn out by any means such a fool as his pepper-box architecture would have led one to guess—on the contrary, a broad solid man with much ingenuity and even delicacy of expression, who had well employed his sixty years or so of life in looking out for himself, and had unhappily found pepper-box architecture his Goshen! From the distance I did not dislike him at all. Panizzi, even *Scribe*, came to the dinner, no ladies there; nothing but two sons of Peel, one at each end, he himself in the middle about opposite to where I sate; Mahon on his left hand, on his right Van de Weyer (Belgian ambassador); not a creature there for whom I cared one penny, except Peel himself. Dinner sumptuous and excellently served, but I should think rather wearisome to everybody, as it certainly was to me. After all the servants but the butler were gone, we began to hear a little of Peel's quiet talk across the table, unimportant, distinguished by its sense of the ludicrous shining through a strong official *rationality* and even seriousness of temper. Distracted *address* of a letter from somebody to Queen Victoria: 'The most noble George Victoria, Queen of England, Knight and Baronet,' or something like that. A man had once written to Peel himself, while secretary, 'that he was weary of life, that if any gentleman wanted for his park-woods a hermit, he, &c.,' all which was very pretty and human as Peel gave it us. In rising we had some question about the pictures in

his dining-room, which are Wilkie's (odious) John Knox at the entrance end, and at the opposite three, or perhaps four, all by Reynolds; Dr. Johnson, original of the engravings one sees; Reynolds himself by his own pencil, and two, or perhaps three, other pictures. Doubts rising about who some lady portrait was, I went to the window and asked Sir Robert himself, who turned with alacrity and talked to us about that and the rest. The *hand* in Johnson's portrait brought an anecdote from him about Wilkie and it at Drayton. Peel spread his own hand over it, an inch or two off, to illustrate or enforce—as fine a man's hand as I remember to have seen, strong, delicate, and scrupulously clean. Upstairs, most of the people having soon gone, he showed us his volumes of autographs—Mirabeau, Johnson, Byron, Scott, and many English kings and officialities: excellent cheerful talk and description; human, but official in all things. Then, with a cordial shake of the hand, dismissal; and the Bishop of Oxford (*mirum!*), insisting on it, took me home in his carriage.

Carlyle had probably encountered the Bishop of Oxford before, at the Ashburtons'; but this meeting at Sir Robert Peel's was the beginning of an intimacy which grew up between these singularly opposite men, who, in spite of differences, discovered that they thought, at bottom, on serious subjects, very much alike. The Bishop once told me he considered Carlyle a most eminently religious man. 'Ah, Sam!' said Carlyle to me one day, 'he is a very clever fellow; I do not hate him near as much as I fear I ought to do.'

Once again, a few days later, Carlyle met Peel at a dinner at Bath House—'a real statesman' as he now discerned him to be. 'He was fresh and hearty, with delicate, gentle, yet frank manners; a kindly man. His reserve as to all great or public matters sits him quite naturally and enhances your respect—

a warm sense of fun, really of genuine broad drollery, looks through him; the hopefullest feature I could clearly see in this last interview or the other. At tea he talked to us readily, on slight hint from me, about Byron (Birron he called him) and their old school-days: kindly reminiscences, agreeable to hear at first hand, though nothing new in them to us.'

At Bath House also, this season, Carlyle was to meet (though without an introduction) a man whom he regarded with freer admiration than he had learnt to feel even for Peel. He was tempted to a ball there, the first and last occasion on which he was ever present at such a scene. He was anxious to see the thing for once, and he saw along with it the hero of Waterloo.

Journal.

June 25, 1850.—Last night at a grand ball at Bath House, the only ball of any description I ever saw. From five to seven hundred select aristocracy; the lights, decorations, houseroom and arrangements perfect (I suppose); the whole thing worth having seen for a couple of hours. Of the many women, only a few were to be called beautiful. I remember the languid, careless, slow air with which the elderly peeresses came into the room and thereafter lounged about. A Miss L——(a general's daughter) was the prettiest I remember of the *schönen Kindern*. Lord Londonderry looked sad, foolish, and surly. His Marchioness, once a beauty you could see, had the finest diamonds of the party, Jane tells me. Lord and Lady Lovelace, Marquis of Breadalbane, thickset farmer-looking man, round steel-grey head with bald crown. *Hat Nichts zu bedeuten*. Anglesea, fine-looking old man trailing his cork leg, shows better on horseback. American Lawrence (minister here), broad, burly, energetically sagacious-looking, a man of sixty with long grey hair swirled round the bald parts of his big head; frightful

American lady, his wife, *à la* Cushman; chin like a powder-horn, sallow, parchment complexion, very tall, very lean, expression thrift—in all senses of the word. 'Thrift, Horatio. Prescott, and the other Americans there, not beautiful any of them. By far the most interesting figure present was the old Duke of Wellington, who appeared between twelve and one, and slowly glided through the rooms—truly a beautiful old man; I had never seen till now how beautiful, and what an expression of graceful simplicity, veracity, and nobleness there is about the old hero when you see him close at hand. His very size had hitherto deceived me. He is a shortish slightish figure, about five feet eight, of good breadth however, and all muscle or bone. His legs, I think, must be the short part of him, for certainly on horseback I have always taken him to be tall. Eyes beautiful light blue, full of mild valour, with infinitely more faculty and geniality than I had fancied before; the face wholly gentle, wise, valiant, and venerable. The voice too, as I again heard, is 'aquiline' clear, perfectly equable—uncracked, that is—and perhaps almost musical, but essentially tenor or almost treble voice—eighty-two, I understand. He glided slowly along, slightly saluting this and that other, clear, clean, fresh as this June evening itself, till the silver buckle of his stock vanished into the door of the next room, and I saw him no more. Except Dr. Chalmers, I have not for many years seen so beautiful an old man.

In his early Radical days, Carlyle had spoken scornfully, as usual, of Peel and Wellington, not distinguishing them from the herd of average politicians. He was learning to know them better, to recognise better, perhaps, how great a man must essentially be who can accomplish anything good under the existing limitations. But the knowledge came too late to ripen into practical acquaintance. Wellington's sun was setting, Peel was actually gone in a few weeks from the dinner at Bath House, and Wellington had passed

that singular eulogy upon him in the House of Lords —singular, but most instructive commentary on the political life of our days, as if Peel was the only public man of whom such a character could be given. 'He had never known him tell a deliberate falsehood.' In the interval, Carlyle met Peel once in the street. He lifted his hat;

the only time (he says) we had ever saluted, owing to mutual bashfulness and pride of humility, I do believe. Sir Robert, with smiling look, extended his left hand and cordially grasped mine in it, with a 'How are you?' pleasant to think of. It struck me that there might certainly be some valuable reform work still in Peel, though the look of all things, his own strict conservatism and even officiality of view, and still more the *cohue* of objects and persons his life was cast amidst, did not increase my hopes of a great result. But he seemed happy and humane and hopeful, still strong and fresh to look upon. Except him, there was nobody I had the smallest hope in; and what he *would* do, which seemed now soon to be tried, was always an interesting feature of the coming time for me. I had an authentic regard for this man and a wish to know more of him—nearly the one man alive of whom I could say so much.

The last great English statesman—the last great constitutional statesman perhaps that England will ever have—died through a fall from his horse in the middle of this summer, 1850.

From Journal.

On a Saturday evening, bright sunny weather, Jane being out at Addiscombe and I to go next day, 29th of June it must have been, I had gone up Piccadilly between four and five p.m., and was returning; half-past six when I got to Hyde Park Corner. Old Marquis of Anglesey was riding a brisk skittish horse, a good way down Piccadilly, just ahead of me; he entered the park as I passed, his horse capering

among the carriages, somewhat to my alarm, not to his. It must have been some five or ten minutes before this, that Sir Robert had been thrown on Constitution Hill and got his death-hurt. I did not hear of it at all till next day at Addiscombe, when the anxiety, which I had hoped was exaggerated, was considerable about him. To this hour, it is impossible to know how the fall took place. Peel had no 'fit,' I think. He was a poor rider, short in the legs, long and heavy in the body. His horse took *both* to rearing and flinging up its heels, says a witness. He came down, it upon him, collar-bone broken. It turned out after death that a rib had been broken (also), driven in upon the region of the lungs or heart. It had been *enough*. On Monday I walked up to some club to get the bulletin, which pretended to be favourable. We went then to the house itself, saw carriages, a scattered crowd simmering about, learnt nothing further, but came home in hope. Tuesday morning, 2nd of July, 'Postman' reported 'a bad night;' uncertain rumours of good and evil through the day. (Ruskin &c. here in the evening; good report from Aubrey de Vere, about 11 p.m.) I had still an obstinate hope. Wednesday morning 'Postman' reported Sir Robert Peel died last night, I think about nine. *Eheu! eheu!* Great expressions of national sorrow, really a serious expression of regret in the public; an affectionate appreciation of this man which he himself was far from being sure of, or aware of, while he lived. I myself have said nothing: hardly know what to think—feel only in general that I have now no definite hope of peaceable improvement for this country; that the one statesman we had, or the least similitude of a statesman so far as I know or can guess, is suddenly snatched away from us. What will become of it? God knows. A *peaceable* result I now hardly expect for this huge wen of corruptions and diseases and miseries; and in the meanwhile the wrigglings and strugglings in Parliament, how they now do, or what they now do there, have become mere zero to me, tedious as a tale that has been told. Dr. Foucart, who was present, told Farre, Sir Robert was frequently insensible; wandered, talking about his watch, about getting to bed. 'Let us light the candles and

go to bed.' 'Have you wound up that watch?' &c. Never alluded to his hurt. He lay all the while in that dining-room, made them take off his bandages as intolerable, would not be examined or manipulated further; got away from his water-bed; slept eight hours upon a sofa, the only sleep he had. 'God bless you all!' he said in a faint voice to his children, clear and weak, and so went his way. Τέλος.

Great men die, like little men; 'there is no difference,' and the world goes its way without them. Parliament was to 'wriggle on' with no longer any Peel to guide; 'the wen,' as Cobbett called London, was to double its already overgrown, monstrous bulk, and Carlyle had still thirty years before him to watch and shudder at its extending. But from this time he cared little about contemporary politics, which he regarded as beating the wind. What *he* himself was next to do was a problem to him which he did not see his way through. Some time or other he meant to write a 'Life of Sterling,' but as yet he had not sufficient composure. Up to this time he had perhaps some hope or purpose of being employed actively in public life. All idea of this kind, if he ever seriously entertained it, had now vanished. As a writer of books, and as this only, he was to make his mark on his generation, but what book was to be written next was entirely vague to him. The house in Chelsea required paint and whitewash again—a process which, for everyone's sake, it was desirable that he should not be present to witness. His friend, Mr. Redwood, again invited him to South Wales. He had been dreadfully 'bored' there; but he was affected, too, by Redwood's loyal attachment. He agreed to go to him for a week or two, and intended afterwards to make his way into Scotland.

On the way to Cardiff, he spent a night with Savage Landor, who was then living apart from his family in Bath.

Landor (he wrote) was in his house, in a fine quiet street like a New Town Edinburgh one, waiting for me, attended only by a nice Bologna dog. Dinner not far from ready; his apartments all hung round with queer old Italian pictures; the very doors had pictures on them. Dinner was elaborately simple. The brave Landor forced me to talk far too much, and we did very near a bottle of claret, besides two glasses of sherry; far too much liquor and excitement for a poor fellow like me. However, he was really stirring company: a proud, irascible, trenchant, yet generous, veracious, and very dignified old man; quite a ducal or royal man in the temper of him; reminded me something of old Sterling, except that for Irish blarney you must substitute a fund of Welsh choler. He left me to go smoking along the streets about ten at night, he himself retiring then, having walked me through the Crescent, Park, &c., in the dusk before. Bath is decidedly the prettiest town in all England. Nay, Edinburgh itself, except for the sea and the Grampians, does not equal it. Regular, but by no means formal streets, all clean, all quiet, yet not dead, winding up in picturesque, lively varieties along the face of a large, broad sweep of woody green sandstone hill, with large outlook to the opposite side of the valley; and fine, decent, clean people sauntering about it, mostly small country gentry, I was told; 'live here for 1,200*l.* a year,' said Landor.

Mr. Redwood was no longer at Llandough, but had moved to Boverton, a place at no great distance. Boverton was nearer to the sea, and the daily bathe could be effected without difficulty. The cocks, cuddies, &c., were as troublesome as usual, though perhaps less so than Carlyle's vivid anathemas on the poor creatures would lead one to suppose. His host

entertained him with more honour than he would have paid to a prince or an archbishop, and Carlyle could not but be grateful.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Boverton: Aug. 12, 1850.

Redwood is friendliness itself, poor fellow; discloses a great quantity of passive intelligence amid his great profundity of dulness: nay, a kind of humour at times, and certainly excels in *good temper* all the human creatures I have been near lately. Several times his fussiness and *fikery* have brought angry growlings out of me, and spurts of fierce impatience which he has taken more like an angel than a Welshman. Perfection of temper! And his pony is very swift and good, and his household is hospitably furnished, and all that he has is at my disposal. On the whole I shall handsomely make out my three weeks, and hope to get profit from it after all.

Carlyle would have been the most perfect of guide-book writers. Nothing escaped his observation; and he never rested till he had learnt all that could be known about any place which he visited: first and foremost, the meaning of the name of it, if it was uncommon or suggestive. His daily letters to Chelsea were full of descriptions of the neighbourhood, all singularly vivid. Here, for instance, is an account of Merthyr Tydvil, to which his friend carried him:—

In 1755 Merthyr Tydvil was a mountain hamlet of five or six houses, stagnant and silent as it had been ever since Tydvil, the king's or laird's daughter, was martyred here, say 1,300 years before. About that time a certain Mr. Bacon, a cunning Yorkshireman, passing that way, discovered that there was iron in the ground—iron and coal. He took a 99 years' lease in consequence, and——in brief, there are now about 50,000 grimy mortals, black and clammy with

soot and sweat, screwing out a livelihood for themselves in that spot of the Taff Valley. Such a set of unguided, hard-worked, fierce, and miserable-looking sons of Adam I never saw before. Ah me! It is like a vision of Hell, and will never leave me, that of these poor creatures broiling, all in sweat and dirt, amid their furnaces, pits, and rolling mills. For here is absolutely 'no' aristocracy or guiding class; nothing but one or two huge iron-masters; and the rest are operatives, petty shopkeepers, Scotch hawkers, &c. &c. The town might be, and will be, one of the prettiest places in the world. It *is* one of the sootiest, squalidest, and ugliest: all cinders and dust-mounds and soot. Their very greens they bring from Bristol, though the ground is excellent all round. Nobody thinks of gardening in such a locality—all devoted to metallic gambling.

The house-cleaning at Chelsea was complicated by the misconduct of servants. Mrs. Carlyle was struggling in the midst of it all, happy that her husband was away, but wishing perhaps that he would show himself a little more appreciative of what she was undergoing. No one ever laid himself more open to being misunderstood in such matters than Carlyle did. He was the gratefullest of men, but, from a shy reluctance to speak of his feelings, he left his gratitude unuttered. He seemed to take whatever was done for him as a matter of course, and to growl if anything was not to his mind. It was only in his letters that he showed what was really in his heart.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Boverton: Aug. 19, 1850.

Keep yourself quiet. Do not let that scandalous *randy* of a girl disturb you a moment more; and be as patient with your poor, soft dumpling of an apprentice as you can, in

hopes of better by-and-by. 'Servants' are at a strange pass in these times. I continually foresee that before very long there will be on all hands a necessity and determination on the part of wise people to do without servants. That is actually a stage of *progress* that is ahead of us. How I feel at this moment the blessedness of such a possibility, had one been trained to do a little ordinary work, and were the due preliminaries well arranged! 'Servants,' on the present principle, are a mere deceptive imagination. Command is nowhere; obedience nowhere. The devil will get it all if it do not mend. Oh! my dear little Jeannie, what a quantity of ugly feats you have always taken upon you in this respect; how you have lain between me and these annoyances, and wrapt me like a cloak against them! I know this well, whether I speak of it or not.

Aug. 21.

Thanks to thee! Oh! know that I have thanked thee sometimes in my silent hours as no words could. For indeed I am sometimes terribly driven into corners in this my life pilgrimage, of late especially; and the thing that is in my heart is known, or can be known, to the Almighty Maker alone.

He stayed three weeks at Boverton, and then gratefully took leave. 'The good Redwood,' as he called his host, died the year following, and he never saw him again. His route to Scotsbrig was, as usual, by the Liverpool and Annan steamer. The discomforts of his journey were not different from other people's in similar circumstances. It was the traveller who was different; and his miseries, comical as they sound, were real enough to so sensitive a sufferer. He sent a history of them to Chelsea on his arrival. 'I am,' he said, 'a very unthankful, ill-conditioned, bilious, wayward, and heartworn son of Adam, I do suspect. Well, you shall hear my complaints. To whom can we complain, if not to one another, after

all?' He had reached Liverpool without misadventure. He had gone on board late in the evening. The night, as the vessel ran down the Mersey, was soft and beautiful. He walked and smoked for an hour on deck, and then went in search of his sleeping-place.

'This way the *gents' cabin*, sir!' and in truth it was almost worth a little voyage to see such a cabin of *gents*; for never in all my travels had I seen the like before, nor probably shall again. The little crib of a place which I had glanced at two hours before and found six beds in had now developed itself by hinge-shelves (which in the day were parts of sofas) and iron brackets into the practical sleeping-place of at least sixteen of the gent species. There they all lay, my crib the only empty one; a pile of clothes up to the very ceiling, and all round it gent packed on gent, few inches between the nose of one gent and the nape of the other gent's neck; not a particle of air, all orifices closed. Five or six of said gents already raging and snoring. And a smell! *Ach Gott!* I suppose it must resemble that of the slave-ships in the middle passage. It was positively immoral to think of sleeping in such a receptacle of abominations.

He sought the deck again; but the night turned to rain, and the deck of a steamer in wet and darkness is not delightful, even in August. When the vessel reached Annan, and 'he was flung into the street,' the unfortunate 'Jonah' could but address a silent word of thanks to the Merciful Power, and 'appeal to Goody and posterity.' At Scotsbrig. he could do as he liked—be silent from morning till night, wander about alone among the hills, see no one, and be nursed in mind and body by the kindest hands; but he was out of order in one as well as the other. The reaction after the Pamphlets was now

telling upon him. Very strange, very characteristic, is the account which he writes of his condition.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Scotsbrig: September 4, 1850.

I find it good that all one's ugly thoughts—ugly as sin and Satan several of them—should come uninterrupted before one and look and do their very worst. Many things tend towards settlement in that way, and silently beginnings of arrangement and determination show themselves. Why, oh! why, should a living man complain after all? We get, each one of us, the common fortune, with superficial variations. A man ought to know that he is *not* ill-used; that if he miss the thing one way he gets it in another. Your 'beautiful blessings,' I have them not. I cannot train myself by having them. Well, then, by doing without them I can train myself. It is there that I go ahead of you. There, too, lie prizes if you knew it.

September 6.

Nothing so like a Sabbath has been vouchsafed to me for many heavy months as these last two days at poor Scotsbrig are. Let me be thankful for them. They were very necessary to me. They will open my heart to sad and affectionate thoughts, which the intolerable burden of my own mean sufferings has stifled for a long time. I do nothing here, and pretend to do nothing but sit silent in the middle of old unutterable reminiscences and poor simple scenes more interesting to me on this side Hades——[1] One should be content to admit that one is Nothing: a poor, vainly struggling soul, yet seen with pity by the Eternal Powers, I do believe, and whose struggles at worst are bending towards their *close*. This puts one to peace when nothing else can; and the beggarly miseries of the mere body abating a little, as with me they sensibly do, it is strange what dark curtains drop off of their own accord, and how the promise of clearer skies again visits one. These last three

[1] Sentence apparently uncompleted.

days have been of surpassing beauty—clear, calm September days, the sky bright and blue, with fluctuating masses of bright clouds. The hills are all spotted with pure light and pure shade; everything of the liveliest yellow on the liveliest green in this lower region. On riding up from the Kirtlebridge side hitherward, I could not but admit that the bright scene, with Burnswark and the infinite azure behind it, was one of the loveliest that I had anywhere seen. Poor old Annandale, after all! . . . A note to Lady Ashburton, after I arrived here, brought this answer yesterday. Great *Gaudeamus* at the Grange, it would seem. Between life *there* and life *here*, as I now have it, it must be admitted there is a contrast. We are about the two extremes of decent human lodging, and I know which answers the best for me. Remember me generally to all friends. Good souls! I like them all better than perhaps they would suspect from my *grim* ways. Sometimes it has struck me, Could not I *continue* this *Sabbatic* period in a room at Craigenputtock, perhaps? Alas! alas!

The evident uncertainty as to his future occupations which appears in these letters, taken with what he told me of his thoughts of public life at the time of his Pamphlets, confirms me in my impression that he had nourished some practical hopes from those Pamphlets, and had imagined that he might perhaps be himself invited to assist in carrying out some of the changes which he had there insisted on. Such hopes, if he had formed them, he must have seen by this time were utterly groundless. Whatever improvements might be attempted, no statesman would ever call on him to take part in the process. To this, which was now a certainty, he had to endeavour to adjust himself; but he was in low spirits—unusually low, even for him. He filled his letters with anecdotes of misfortunes, miseries, tragedies, among his Annan-

dale neighbours, mocking at the idea that this world was made for happiness. He went to stay with his sister at Dumfries.

The kindness of these friends (he said), their very kindness, works me misery of which they have no idea. In the gloom of my own imagination I seem to myself a pitiable man. Last night I had, in spite of noises and confusions many, a tolerable sleep, most welcome to me, for on the Monday night here I did not sleep at all. Yesterday was accordingly a day! My poor mother, too, is very weak, and there are *clothes* a-buying, and confusions very many; and no minute can I be left alone to let my sad thoughts settle into sad composure, but every minute I must talk, talk. God help me! To be dead altogether! But fie! fie! This is very weak, and I am but a spoony to write so. Tomorrow I will write to you more deliberately. I had no idea I was so sick of heart and had made such progress towards age and steady dispiritment. Alas! alas! I ought to be wrapped in cotton wool, and laid in a locked drawer at present. I can stand nothing. I am really ashamed of the figure I cut among creatures in the ordinary human situation. One couldn't do without human creatures altogether. Oh! no. But at present, in such moods as I am now in, it were such an inexpressible saving of fret and botheration and futile distress if they would but let me alone. Woe's me! Woe *is* me!

It was in this humour that Carlyle read 'Alton Locke,' which Kingsley sent him. I well remember the gratification with which Kingsley showed me his approving criticism; and it speaks volumes for the merit of that book that at such a time Carlyle could take pleasure in it. Little did either of us then guess in what a depth of depression it had found him. The cloud lifted after a while; but these fits when they came were entirely disabling. Robust constitutional strength, which is half of it insensibility, was not among

the gifts which Nature had bestowed on Carlyle. His strength was moral; it lay in an unalterable resolution to do what was right and to speak what was true —a strength nobly sufficient for the broad direction of his life and intellect, but leaving him a helpless victim of the small vexations which prey like mosquitoes on the nerves of unfortunate men of genius. Sometimes, indeed, by the help of Providence, his irritations neutralised one another. In his steady thrift, he had his clothes made for him in Annandale, the cloth bought at Dumfries and made up by an Ecclefechan tailor. His wardrobe required refitting before his return to London, and the need of attending to it proved an antidote to his present miseries. After relating his exertions in the tailor department, he says very prettily:—

Do not regret these contrivances of a 'rude age,' dear Goody mine. They are still useful for our circumstances, and are always beautiful, as human virtue is. We are not yet *rich*, my woman, nor likely ever to be. Devil may care for that part of it! No new 'suit of virtues:' only not quite so tight a fit as the old one; one advantage that, undoubtedly. But Chapman's account for the Pamphlets[1] might teach us moderation if we were forgetting ourselves. Such a return of *money* for so much toil and endurance of reproach, and other things, as has not often come athwart the Literary Lion. Devil may care for that, too! He says the account is all right. He will pay you your bit of an allowance this week, however. And so let him and his trade ledgers go their gates again. 'The little that a just man hath is more and better far, &c.,' said the old Psalmist, a most true and comfortable saying.

With the end of September London and Cheyne Row came in sight again. The repairs were finished.

[1] The outcry stopped the sale of them for many months and even years.

At Scotsbrig, when the clothes had come in, he found himself 'a distempered human soul that had slept ill, and was terribly dadded about: a phenomenon not quite unfamiliar to his wife's observation.' He had thought of a trip to Iona before going home, but the season was too far advanced. A short visit was to be managed to his friends in Cumberland. Then he would hasten back, and be as amiable as he could when he arrived. Mrs. Carlyle, in one of the saddest of her sad letters, had regretted that her company had become so useless to him.[1] 'Oh!' he said, 'if you could but cease being conscious of what your company is to me! The consciousness is *all* the malady in that. Ah me! Ah me! But that, too, will mend if it pleases God.'

On the 27th of September he parted sorrowfully from his mother at Scotsbrig, after a wild midnight walk in wind and rain the evening before. Three days were given to the Speddings at Keswick, and thence, on pressing invitation, he went to the Marshalls at Coniston, where he met the Tennysons, then lately married. Neither of these visits brought much comfort. Mr. Spedding had gone with the rest of the world in disapproving the 'Latter-day Pamphlets.' At the Marshalls' he was prevented from sleeping by 'poultry, children, and flunkeys.'

Love of the picturesque is here (he wrote from Coniston). Gorgeous magnificence *minus* quiet or any sort of comfort which to me, in my exceptional thin-skinned thrice morbid condition, were *human*. I had to run away abruptly from a survey of certain sublime rock-passes and pikes, never to be forgotten, lest the post should go without my writing. Here,

[1] *Letters and Memorials*, vol. ii. p. 133.

avoiding lunch, too, and taking a solitary pipe instead, I end for this day, feeling myself to be, of all men, by far the most miserable, like that old Greek, yet knowing well privately that it is *not* so, and begging pity and pardon from poor Goody, whom God bless.

He announced that he could not stay, that he must leave the next day, &c. Every attention was paid him. His room was changed. Not a sound was allowed to disturb him. He had a sound sleep, woke 'to find a wonderful alteration in himself, with the sun shining over lakes and mountains;' and then he thought he would stay 'another day and still other days' if he were asked. But he had been so peremptory that his host thought it uncourteous to press him further, and then he discovered that he was not wanted, 'nothing but the name of him, which was already got.' Mr. Marshall himself accompanied him to the Windermere station, 'forcing him to talk, which was small favour;' and the express train swept him back to London. Men of genius are 'kittle' guests, and, of all such, Carlyle was the 'kittlest.'

His wife was at the Grange when he reached Cheyne Row. There was no one to receive him but her dog Nero, who after a moment's doubt 'barked enthusiastic reception,' and the cat, 'who sat reflective, without sign of the smallest emotion, more or less.' He was obliged to Nero, he forgave the cat. He was delighted to be at home again. The improvements in the house called out his enthusiastic approbation. 'Oh Goody!' he exclaimed, 'incomparable artist Goody! It is really a series of glad surprises; and the noble grate upstairs! all good and best. My bonny little artistikin. Really it is clever and wise

to a degree, and I admit it is pity that you were not here to show it me yourself. But I shall find it all out too. Thank you, thank you a thousand times!' The tossing and whirling seemed even more unattractive in the comparison.

But I have done with it (he said), and with the astonishingly admirable lights and shadows and valleys and Langdale pikes and worship of the picturesque in all its branches, from all and every of which for the future 'Good Lord deliver huz.' Oh my poor Goody! It is a great blessing to be born a person of sense, even with the temper of a rat-trap. One must put up with the temper; the other is not to be put up with. Alfred looks really improved, I should say; cheerful in what he talks, and looking forward to a future less detached than the past has been. A good soul, find him where or how situated you may. Mrs. Tennyson lights up bright glittering blue eyes when you speak to her; has wit, has sense; and were it not that she seems so very delicate in health, I should augur really well of Tennyson's adventure.

Mrs. Carlyle was distracted at his return in her own absence. She insisted that she must go to him at once; but she had been gaining strength at the Grange, and the Ashburtons begged her to stay on. Carlyle urged it too. With pretty delicacy he said, as if learning a lesson from her being away, 'I shall know better than ever I did what the comfort to me is, of being received by you when I arrive worn out, and you welcome me with your old smiles and the light of a human fire and a human home.' As she persisted that she must go back, he accepted Lady Ashburton's proposal that he should himself join his wife for a week or two before finally settling in for the winter; and it was not till the middle of October that they were together again in their own home, when he summed up in his Journal

the experiences of his wanderings. Savage Landor, whom he calls 'a proud, indignant, and remarkable old man,' had pleased him from sympathy of discontent with the existing order of things. His visit to poor Mr. Redwood he describes as 'dulness and the inanity of worse than solitude.' He had left Boverton 'in a humour strangely forlorn, sad, and sickly even for him.' He goes on :—

Four weeks at Scotsbrig: my dear old mother, much broken since I had last seen her, was a perpetual source of sad and, as it were, sacred emotion to me. Sorrowful mostly and disgusting, and even degrading, were my other emotions. God help me! Much physical suffering. Morality sunk down with me almost to zero so far as consciousness went. Surely there should be a hospital for poor creatures in such a condition as mine. But let us not speak. In the end of September I went over to Cumberland. T. Spedding limited and dull. Off to Coniston for two days. Scenery, &c. Obliged to steer for Chelsea by express train, and see whether in my home was any rest for me. Alas! not there either. Arrive about midnight: my wife gone down to the Grange. Nothing for it but stoicism, of such sort as one had, once more. In about a week go to the Grange to join my wife there. Spend ten days amid miscellaneous company in the common dyspeptic, utterly isolated, and contemptible condition. Home again on Saturday gone a week; and here ever since at least in a silent state. I have still hopes of writing another book, *better* perhaps than any I have yet done; but in all other respects this seems really the Nadir of my fortunes; and in hope, desire, or outlook, so far as common mortals reckon such, I never was more bankrupt. Lonely, shut up within my contemptible and yet *not* deliberately ignoble self, perhaps there never was, in modern literary or other history, a more solitary soul, *capable* of any friendship or honest relation to others. For the rest I do in some measure silently defy destiny, and try to look with steady eye into it,

not hoping from it (except that I might get some *work* well done), nor fearing it for the remnant of my time here. Latent pieties, I do believe, still lie in me; deep wells of sorrow, reverence, and affection; but alas! that is not the humour at present, and my utmost prayer is that I might deal wisely with that too, since it is the lot of me.

CHAPTER XIX.

A.D. 1851–2. ÆT. 56–57.

Reviews of the Pamphlets—Cheyne Row—Party at the Grange—'Life of Sterling'—Reception of it—Coleridge and his disciples—Spiritual optics—Hyde Park Exhibition—A month at Malvern—Scotland—Trip to Paris with Lord Ashburton.

THERE is a condition familiar to men of letters, and I suppose to artists of all descriptions, which may be called a moulting state. The imagination, exhausted by long efforts, sheds its feathers, and mind and body remain sick and dispirited till they grow again. Carlyle was thus moulting after the 'Latter-day Pamphlets.' He was eager to write, but his ideas were shapeless. His wings would not lift him. He was chained to the ground. Unable to produce anything, he began to read voraciously; he bought a copy of the 'Annual Register;' he worked entirely through it, finding there 'a great quantity of agreeable and not quite useless information.' He read Sophocles with profound admiration. His friends came about Cheyne Row, eager to see him after his absence. They were welcome in a sense, but 'alas!' he confessed, 'nobody comes whose talk is half so good to me as silence. I fly out of the way of everybody, and would much

rather smoke a pipe of wholesome tobacco than talk to anyone in London just now. Nay, their talk is often rather an offence to me, and I murmur to myself, Why open one's lips for such a purpose?'

The autumn quarterlies were busy upon the Pamphlets, and the shrieking tone was considerably modified. A review of them by Masson in the 'North British' distinctly pleased Carlyle. A review in the 'Dublin' he found 'excellently serious,' and conjectured that it came from some Anglican pervert or convert. It was written, I believe, by Dr. Ward. The Catholics naturally found points of sympathy in so scornful a denunciation of modern notions about liberty. Carlyle and they believed alike in the divine right of wisdom to govern folly. 'The wise man's eyes were in his head, but the fool walked in darkness.' This article provided him 'with interesting reflections for a day or two.' But books were his chief resource in these months. A paper in the 'Annual Register' set him reading Wycherley's comedies, not with satisfaction. He calls them a combination of 'human platitude and pravity' seldom equalled. 'Faugh!' he said, 'I shut up the book last night, having actually worked through the greater part of it with real abomination.' 'Scaligerana' was far better. From this he made many extracts. He calls it the most curious daguerreotype likeness of a great man's loose talk that he had ever seen,

> alternating between French and Latin, between high and low, between thick and thin, the most free-and-easy shovelling out of whatever came readiest in a human soul, a strange draggly-wick'd tallow candle lighted in the belly of a dark

dead past, a sorcerer's dance of extinct human beings and things.

At intervals he thought of writing something. 'Ireland' came back upon him occasionally as still a possibility. A theory of education on the plan of Goethe's 'Wanderjahre' would give him scope to say something not wholly useless. These were the two subjects which looked least contemptible. There was English history too: 'The Conqueror,' 'Simon de Montfort,' 'The Battle of Towton.' 'But what,' he asked himself, '*can* be done with a British Museum under fat pedants, with a world so sunk as ours, and alas! with a soul so sunk and subdued to its elements as mine seems to be? *Voyons, voyons! au moins taisons-nous.*'

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: December 14, 1850.

Jane has taken no cold yet; goes out in some omnibus whenever the day is not quite wretched. I hear nothing of her hurt,[1] and I believe it is getting well, though she does not seem to like any speech about it. I am myself decidedly better than when I wrote last—have, in fact, nothing wrong about me except an incurably squeamish liver and stomach. I generally go out for an hour's walking before bed-time; the little snaffle of a *messin* called Nero commonly goes with me, runs snuffling into every hole, or pirrs about at my side like a little glassy rat, and returns home the joyfullest and dirtiest little dog one need wish to see. . . . 'No Popery' is still loud enough in these parts, and it is confidently expected these pasteboard cardinals and their rotten garments will be packed out of this island in some way. *Ultimus crepitus diaboli*, as Beza said of the Jesuits.

[1] *Letters and Memorials*, vol. ii. p. 141.

Journal.

December 30, 1850.—The year is wearing out; life is wearing out; and I can get to no work. *Me miserum!* Of course the thing is difficult—most things are—but I continually fly from it too, and my poor days pass in the shabbiest, wastefullest manner. Ballantyne, Maccall, and John Welsh were with us on Christmas Day to dinner. Last night Kingsley and Darwin. Good is to be got out of no creature. Lady Bulwer Lytton—a most melancholy interview of her seeking. How the Furies do still walk this earth, and shake their 'dusky glowing torches' on men and women! Can do nothing with the poor lady's novel, I fear. Yesterday I was clearing myself of a tangle of extraneous letters, &c., with which *I* had properly nothing to do. How much 'love,' 'respect,' 'admiration,' &c., is there in this world which resembles the 'love' of dogs for a dead horse! 'Fie on't! 'tis an unweeded garden;' and then the sluggard of a gardener! Awake! Wilt thou never awake, then?

Notwithstanding the hopes and resolutions which Carlyle had brought back with him from Scotland, the domestic atmosphere was not clear in Cheyne Row, and had not been clear since his return. Nothing need be said about this. It added to his other discomforts—that was all. In the Journal of January 20, there is this curious observation:—

> It is man's part to deal with Destiny, who is *known* to be inexorable. It is the woman's more to deal with the man, whom, even in impossible cases, she always thinks capable of being moved by human means; in this respect a harder, at least a less dignified, lot for her.

At the end of January he went off again to the Grange, alone this time, to meet an interesting party there; Thirlwall, Milnes, the Stanleys, Sir John Simeon, Trench, then Dean of Westminster, and several others.

He might have enjoyed himself if his spirits had been in better order, 'for, thanks to the Bishop, the conversation was a thought more solid than was usual.' One evening it took a remarkable form, and as he more than once described the scene to me, I quote what he says about it in a letter.

> Last night there was a dreadful onslaught made on—what shall I say? properly the *Church*—in presence of Trench and the Bishop. Trench affected to be very busy reading, and managed extremely well. The Bishop was also grand and rationally manful, intrinsically agreeing with almost everything I said. Poor Simeon, a gentleman in search of a religion, sate stupent in the whirlpool of heterodox hail, and seemed to feel if his head were on his shoulders. This is an extraordinary epoch of the world, with a witness!

It was perhaps as an effect of this singular piece of talk, at any rate in discharge of a long-recognised duty, that Carlyle, on returning home, set about his long-meditated life of John Sterling. To leave Sterling any longer as an anatomical subject for the religious newspapers was treason to his friend's memory. He had waited, partly from want of composure, partly that the dust might settle a little; and now, having leisure on his hands, and being otherwise in the right mood, he re-read Sterling's letters, collected information from surviving relatives, and without difficulty—indeed, with entire ease and rapidity—he produced in three months what is perhaps the most beautiful biography in the English language. His own mind for the past year had been restless and agitated, but no restlessness can be traced in the 'Life of Sterling.' The scorn, the pride, the indignation of the Pamphlets lie hushed down under a stream

of quiet affection. The tone is calm and tender. Here, more than in any of the rest of his writings, he could give play, without a jarring note, to the gentlest qualities of his heart and intellect. It was necessary for him to express himself more plainly than he had hitherto done on the received religious creeds; but he wrote without mockery, without exasperation, as if his angry emotions were subdued to the element in which he was working. A friend's grave was no place for theological controversy, and though he allowed his humour free play, it was real play, nowhere savagely contemptuous. Sterling's life had been a short one. His history was rather that of the formation of a beautiful character than of accomplished achievement; at once the most difficult to delineate, yet the most instructive if delineated successfully. The aim of the biographer was to lift the subject beyond the sordid element of religious exasperations; yet it was on Sterling's 'religion,' in the noble meaning of the word, that the entire interest turned. Growing to manhood in an atmosphere of Radicalism, political and speculative, Sterling had come in contact with the enthusiasts of European revolution. He had involved himself in a movement in which accident only prevented him from being personally engaged, and which ended in the destruction of his friends. In the depression which followed he had fallen under the influence of Coleridge. He had learnt from Coleridge that the key of the mystery of the universe lay, after all, with the Church creed rightly understood, and that, by an intellectual legerdemain, uncertainties could be converted into certainties. The process by which the wonderful

transformation was to be effected, Carlyle himself had heard from the prophet's own lips, and had heard without conviction when Irving long before had taken him to Highgate to worship.

To the young and ardent mind, instinct with pious nobleness, yet driven to the grim deserts of Radicalism for a faith, Coleridge's speculations had a charm much more than literary, a charm almost religious and prophetic. The constant gist of his discourse was lamentation over the sunk condition of the world, which he recognised to be given up to atheism and materialism: full of mere sordid mis-beliefs, mis-pursuits, and mis-results. All science had become mechanical, the science not of men, but of a kind of human beavers. Churches themselves had died away into a godless mechanical condition, and stood there as mere cases of articles, mere forms of Churches, like the dried carcases of once swift camels which you find left withering in the thirst of the universal desert—ghastly portents for the present, beneficent ships of the desert no more. Men's souls were blinded, hebetated, and sunk under the influence of atheism and materialism, and Hume and Voltaire. The world for the present was an extinct world, deserted of God and incapable of well-doing till it changed its heart and spirit. This, I think, expressed with less of indignation and with more of long-drawn querulousness, was always recognisable as the ground tone, which truly a pious young heart, driven into Radicalism and the opposition party, could not but recognise as a too sorrowful truth, and ask the oracle with all earnestness, 'What remedy, then?' The remedy, though Coleridge himself professed to see it as in sunbeams, could not, except by processes unspeakably difficult, be described to you at all. On the whole, these dead Churches, this dead English Church especially, must be brought to life again. Why not? It was not dead. The soul of it in this parched-up body was tragically asleep only. Atheistic philosophy was true on its side; and Hume and Voltaire could on their own ground speak irrefragably for themselves against any Church. But lift the Church and them

into a higher sphere of argument, they died into inanition. The Church revivified itself into pristine florid vigour, became once more a living ship of the desert, and invincibly bore you over stock and stone. But how? but how? By attending to the 'reason' of man, said Coleridge, and duly chaining up the 'understanding' of man. The *Vernunft* (reason) and *Verstand* (understanding) of the Germans—it all turned upon these if you could well understand them, which you couldn't. For the rest, Coleridge had on the anvil various books, especially was about to write one grand book *on the Logos*, which would help to bridge the chasm for us. So much appeared, however: Churches, though proved false as you had imagined, were still true as you were to imagine. Here was an artist who would burn you up an old Church, root and branch, and then, as the alchemist professed to do with organic substances in general, distil you an 'Astral Spirit' from the ashes, which was the very image of the old burnt article, its airdrawn counterpart. This you had, or might get, and draw uses from if you could. Wait till the book on the Logos was done; alas! till your own terrene eyes, blind with conceit and the dust of logic, were purged, subtilised, and spiritualised into the sharpness of vision requisite for discerning such an 'O-m-m-mject.' The ingenuous young English head of those days stood strangely puzzled by such revelations, uncertain whether it was getting inspired or getting infatuated into flat imbecility; and strange effulgence of new day, or else of deeper meteoric night, coloured the horizon of the future for it.

Carlyle for himself had refused to follow Coleridge into these airy speculations. He for one dared not play with truth, and he regarded this metaphysical conjuring as cowardly unmanliness, fatal to honesty of heart, and useful only to enable cravens, who in their souls knew better, to close their eyes to fact.

What the light of your mind (he says), which is the direct inspiration of the Almighty, pronounces incredible, that, in God's name, leave uncredited. At your peril do not

try believing that. No subtlest hocus-pocus of 'reason' *versus* 'understanding' will avail for that feat. . . . Only in the world's last lethargy can such things be done and accounted safe and pious. . . . 'Do you think the living God is a buzzard idol,' sternly asks Milton, 'that you dare address Him in this manner?' It is not now known, what never needed proof or statement before, that religion is not a doubt—that it is a certainty, or else a mockery and horror; that none of all the many things we are in doubt about can by any alchemy be made a 'religion' for us, but are, and must continue, a baleful quiet or unquiet hypocrisy for us, and bring—salvation, do we fancy? I think it is another thing they will bring, and are on all hands visibly bringing this long while.

He held sternly to what his conscience told him, and would not listen to the Coleridgean siren. But many did listen, and ran upon the fatal shore. Intellectual clergymen especially, who had been troubled in their minds, imagined that they found help and comfort there. If, as they had been told, it was a sin to disbelieve the Church's creed, then the creed itself must rest on something beyond probability and the balance of evidence. Why not, then, on Coleridge's '*reason*'? It was a serious thing, besides, to have a profession to which they were committed for the means of living, and which the law forbade them to change. Thus, at the time when Carlyle was writing this book, a whole flight of clergy, with Frederick Maurice at their head and Kingsley for lieutenant, were preaching regeneration on Coleridge's principles, and persuading themselves that 'the sacred river could run backwards after all.' Sterling, before them, had been carried away by the same illusion. In his enthusiasm, he took orders; a few months' experience sufficed to show so true an in-

telligence that the Highgate philosophy was 'bottled moonshine;' and Carlyle draws the picture of him, not, like Julius Hare, as of 'a vanquished doubter,' but as 'a victorious believer,' resolutely shaking himself clear of artificial spider-webs—holding fast with all his powers to what he knew to be true and good, and living for that, and that only.

In Sterling's writings and actions (says Carlyle), were they capable of being well read, we consider that there is for all true hearts, and especially for young noble seekers and strivers towards what is highest, a mirror, in which some shadow of themselves and of their immeasurably complex arena will profitably present itself. Here, also, is one encompassed and struggling even as they now are. This man also had said to himself, not in mere catechism words, but with all his instincts, and the question thrilled in every nerve of him and pulsed in every drop of his blood, 'What is the chief end of man? Behold! I, too, would live and work as beseems a denizen of this universe—a child of the Highest God! By what means is a noble life still possible for me here? Ye heavens, and thou, earth, oh how?' The history of this long-continued prayer and endeavour, lasting in various figures for near forty years, may now, and for some time coming, have something to say to men. Nay, what of men of the world? Here, visible to myself for some while, was a brilliant human presence, distinguishable, honourable, and loveable amid the dim common populations, among the million little beautiful once more a beautiful human soul, whom I among others recognised and lovingly walked with while the years and the hours were. Sitting now by his tomb in thoughtful mood, the new times bring a new duty to me. Why write the life of Sterling? I imagine I had a commission higher than the world's—the dictate of Nature herself to do what is now done. *Sic prosit.*[1]

[1] Among the many evidences of Carlyle's interest in young men who applied to him for advice and guidance, I find the following letter, written at the time at which he was engaged on the 'Life of Sterling,' and

Something of the high purpose which Carlyle assigns to Sterling was perhaps reflected from himself, as with a lover's portrait of his mistress; yet his account of him is essentially as true as it is affectionate. He did not give his esteem easily, and when it was given it was nobly deserved. I well remember the effect which the book produced when it appeared. He himself valued it little, and even doubted whether it was worth publishing. As a piece of literary work it was more admired than anything which he had yet written. The calmness was a general surprise. He had a tranquil command of his subject, and his treatment of it was exquisitely

showing that no occupation, however absorbing, could lead him to neglect a duty which, when the occasion offered, he always regarded as sacred:—

'Chelsea: March 9, 1850.

'My good young Friend,—I am much obliged by the regard which you entertain for me, and do not blame your enthusiasm, which well enough becomes your young years. If my books teach you anything, don't mind in the least whether other people believe it or not; but do you, for your own behoof, lay it to heart as a real acquisition you have made —more properly, as a real message left with you, which *you* must set about fulfilling, whatever others do. This is really all the counsel I can give you about what you read in my books or those of others: practise what you learn there; instantly, and in all ways, begin turning the belief into a fact, and continue at that till you get more and even more belief, with which also do the like. It is idle work otherwise to write books or to read them. And be not surprised that "people have no sympathy with you." That is an accompaniment that will attend you all your days if you mean to lead an earnest life. The "people" could not save you with their "sympathy," if they had never so much of it to give. A man can and must save himself, with or without their sympathy, as it may chance. And may all good be with you, my kind young friend, and a heart stout enough for this adventure you are upon; that is the best good of all.

'I remain, yours very sincerely,

'T. CARLYLE.'

This is one of thousands of such letters, written out of Carlyle's heart, and preserved by those to whom they were addressed as their most precious possession.

delicate. He was no longer censuring the world as a prophet, but delighting it as an artist. The secular part of society pardoned the fierceness with which he had trampled on them for so beautiful an evidence of the tenderness of his real heart. The religious world was not so well satisfied. Anglicans, Protestants, Catholics had hoped from 'Cromwell,' and even from the Pamphlets, that, as against spiritual Radicalism, he would be on their side. They found themselves entirely mistaken. 'Does not believe in us either, then?' was the cry. 'Not one of the *religiones licitæ* will this man acknowledge.' Frederick Maurice's friends were the most displeased of all. The irreverence with which he had treated Coleridge was not to be forgiven. From all that section of Illuminati who had hitherto believed themselves his admirers, he had cut himself off for ever, and, as a teacher, he was left without disciples, save a poor handful who had longed for such an utterance from him. He himself gathered no conscious pleasure from what he had done. 'A poor tatter of a thing,' he called it, valuable only as an honest tribute of affection to a lost friend. It was so always. The execution of all his work fell so far short of his intention that when completed it seemed to be worth nothing.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: April 5, 1851.

I told the Doctor about 'John Sterling's Life,' a small, insignificant book or pamphlet I have been writing. The booksellers got it away from me the other morning, to see how much there is of it, in the first place. I know not altogether myself whether it is worth printing or not, but rather think that will be the end of it whether or not. It

has cost little trouble, and need not do much ill, if it do no great amount of good. . . . Alas, alas! I have so many things still to write—immense masses of things; and the time for writing them gets ever shorter, and, as it seems, the composure, strength, and other opportunity less and less. We must do what we can. I am weak, very irritable, too, under my bits of burdens, and bad company for anybody, and shall need a long spell of the country somewhere if I can get it. In general, I feel as if it would be very good for me to be *covered under a tub* wherever I go, or, at least, set to work, like James Aitkin's half-mad friend, '*ay maistly in a place by himsel'*.

Among the 'irritations' was a portrait which had been taken of him in Annandale, and of which an engraving was now sent to him. No painter ever succeeded with Carlyle. One had made him 'like a flayed horse;' of the present one he says:—

Three months ago —— solicited me to sit for this thing. I refused; she entreated; I consented, and here it is. No more abominable blotch, without one feature of mine, was ever called by the name of a rational man. It is the portrait of an idiot that has taken Glauber salts and lost his eyesight. We burn it and forget it. N.B.—Never again consent to the like; learn generally to say 'No.' Ah! could I? The character attached, written by some young man unknown to me, is very kind, and not bad at all. To the fire! To the fire!

This was nothing. The real uneasiness was about 'the immense masses of things' on which he wanted to write, and project after project rose and faded before he could see his way. The 'Exodus from Houndsditch' was still one of them; ought he, or ought he not, to be explicit in that great matter, and sketch the outlines of a creed which might hereafter be sincerely believed?

'Birth of a cherry' in the spring of the year (he writes); birth of a planet in the spring of the æons. The All produces them alike, builds them together out of its floating atoms, out of its infinite opulences. The germ of an idea lies behind that. Another 'spiritual world,' its blaze of splendour as yet all veiled, hangs struggling behind those wrecks and dust-clouds—Hebrew, Greek, &c. When will it be born into clearness?

Again, April 1851 :—

In the spiritual world, as in the astronomical, it is *the earth* that turns and produces the phenomena of the heavens. In all manner of senses this is true; we are in the thick of the confusion attendant on learning *this*; and thus all is at present so chaotic with us. Let this stand as an *aphoristic saying*? or work it out with some lucidity of detail? Most true it is, and it forms the secret of the spiritual epoch we are in.

Attempt to work it out Carlyle did in the two fragments on 'Spiritual Optics' which I printed in the second volume of his *early* life. He there seems to say that something of the sort was expected of him, and even obligatory upon him. But either he felt that the age was not ripe, or he could not develop the idea satisfactorily, and he left what he had written to mature in some other mind. 'Few men,' he says at this time, 'were ever more puzzled to find their road than I am just now. Be silent! Look and seek!' His test of progress—of the moral worth of his own or any other age—was the *men* that it produced. He admired most of all things in this world single-minded and sincere people, who believed honestly what they professed to believe, and lived it out in their actions. Properly, he admired nothing else, and his special genius lay in depicting such ages and

persons. The 'Cid,' as he was looking about him for subjects, tempted him for a few weeks. The story of the Cid is the roughest, truest, most genial of the epics of modern Europe, and some picture, he thought, might be drawn out of it of the struggle of Spanish chivalry with the Moslem. He read various books —Müller's, Southey's, &c.—with this view, but he found, as everyone else has found, that although Ruy Diaz in the poem is as real as Achilles, nothing can be made of him in the shape of history. Müller he found 'stilting and affected, walking as if he were half-*skating*;' other learned writers ostentatious and windy. 'On the whole,' he said, 'I can make less of the Cid than I expected, and, in fact, cannot get any clear face view of him at all.' Should he try William the Conqueror and the Norsemen? This seemed more feasible, and his own sympathies—his own heart itself was Scandinavian; all the virtues we possessed he believed to have come to us out of our Norse ancestry. But this, too, faded, and his mind wandered from thing to thing.[1]

[1] Had Carlyle turned his mind to it, he would have been a great philologist. I find in his Note-book at this period a remark on a peculiarity of the English language too valuable to be omitted :—

'Did I mark anywhere the absurd state of our *infinitive* of verbs used as a substantive? Building is good. *Bâtir est bon. Ædificare bonum est. Bauen ist gut.* In all languages, and by the nature of speech itself, it is the *infinitive* that we use in such cases. How, in the name of wonder, does English alone seem to give us the present participle? Many years ago I perceived the reason to be this: *Build* (the verb) was anciently *Builden.* All infinitives, as they still do in German, ended in *en*; our beautiful Lindley Murray, alarmed at a mispronunciation like "Buildin'," stuck a *g* to the end of it, and so here we are with one of the most perfect solecisms daily in our mouths—a participle where a participle cannot be. I cannot pretend to give any specific appreciation of the English as compared with other languages. It often seems to me, though with many intrinsic merits and lost capabilities, one of the most bar-

A new cant came up at this epoch to put him out of patience—Prince Albert's Grand Industrial Exhibition and Palace of Aladdin in Hyde Park, a temple for the consecration of commerce, &c., with the Archbishop of Canterbury for fugleman, a contrivance which was to bring in a new era, and do for mankind what Christianity had tried and failed to do. For such a thing as this Carlyle could have no feeling but contempt.

Journal.

April 21, 1851.—Crystal Palace—bless the mark!—is fast getting ready, and bearded figures already grow frequent on the streets; 'all nations' crowding to us with their so-called industry or ostentatious frothery. All the loose population of London pours itself every holiday into Hyde Park round this strange edifice. Over in Surrey there is a strange agreeable solitude in the walks one has. My mad humour is urging me to flight from this monstrous place—flight 'over to Denmark to learn Norse,' for example.

barous tongues now spoken by civilised creatures; a language chiefly adapted for *invoices*, drill-sergeant words of command, and such like. The dropping of the *g* (*ge* in German) from our preterite participles, so that participle and aorist, except by position, are undistinguishable, is an immense loss of resource; your sentence is thus foot-shackled to an amazing extent. Other losses, virtual loss of declension (all but one case), of inflexion (almost altogether); these also, though a gain of speed for invoices, &c., are a sad loss for speech or writing, and shackle you very sore. Yet Shakespeare wrote in English. Honour the Shakespeare who subdued the most obstinate material, and made it melt before him. What will become of English? I can by no means predict eternity for our present hidebound dialect of English; but there is such a solid note of worth in this language, and it is spoken by such a multitude of important human creatures just now, that it has evidently a great part to play yet, and will enter largely into the speech of the future, when all Europe shall gradually have, if not one speech, say three:—1. Teutonic—English for the heart of it, with Danish, German, Dutch, &c.; 2, Roman—French the head element; and 3, Sclavonic—Russian the ditto. Those will be grand times, Mrs. Rigmarole—*ohe, jam satis!*

Every season my suffering and resistance drives me on to some such mad project, and every season it fails. 'I can't get out.' There was certainly no element ever contrived in which the life of man was rendered more barren and unwholesome than this same. Not to be helped at present, it would seem. Heigho! old age is stern and sad, but not unbeautiful if we could guide it wisely. Try to keep a little piety in thy heart; in spite of all mad contradictions, enough to drive oneself utterly mad if one had no patience, try to maintain a small altar-flame burning there. *Eheu! eheu!*

May 3.—Cold grey weather. All the world busy with their Industrial Exhibition. I am sick, very sad, and, as usual for a long time back, not able to get on with anything. My silence and isolation, my utter loneliness in this world, is complete. Never in my life did I feel so utterly windbound, lamed, bewildered, incapable of stirring from the spot in any good direction whatever. *Da wäre guter Rath theuer*; and not even an attempt towards it can be made. The human beings that come round one have the effect generally upon me of beings that can or will give me no help in this my extreme need, and that ought not to be so unkind as to *hinder* me when I am so near the wall. One law only is clear to me: *Hold thy peace!* Admit not into thy counsel those that cannot have any business there; and, with shut lips, walk on the best thou with thy lamed limbs canst, and not a word more here or elsewhere.

Poor 'human beings that came round him'! How could they help, how could they offer to help? They came to worship. It was not for them to advise or encourage. He was their teacher. They came to learn of him and receive humbly what he might please to give them, and he himself was sick and moulting. His feverishly active intellect had no fixed employment, and the mental juices were preying upon themselves. When summer came, and the Exhibition

opened, London grew intolerable. The enthusiasm for this new patent invention to regenerate the human race was altogether too much for him. He fled to Malvern for the water-cure, and became, with his wife, for a few weeks the guest of Dr. Gully, who, long years afterwards, was brought back so terribly to his remembrance. After long wavering he was beginning seriously to think of Frederick the Great as his next subject; if not a hero to his mind, yet at heart a man who had played a lofty part in Europe without stooping to conventional cant. With Frederick looming before him he went to cool his fever in the Malvern waters. The disease was not in his body, loudly as he complained of it. The bathing, packing, drinking proved useless—worse, in his opinion, than useless. 'He found by degrees that water, taken as medicine, was the most destructive drug he had ever tried.' He 'had paid his tax to contemporary stupor.' That was all. Gully himself, who would take no fees from him, he had not disliked, and was grateful for his hospitality. He stayed a month in all. His wife went to her friends in Manchester; he hastened to hide himself in Scotsbrig, full of gloom and heaviness, and totally out of health.

In a letter which Mrs. Carlyle wrote to him after they separated, she reprimanded him somewhat sharply for having come to her, as she supposed, for a parting kiss, with a lighted cigar in his mouth, and in the 'Letters and Memorials' he allowed the reproach to stand without explanation.[1] Evidently she had resented the outrage on the spot, and, as he humbly said, 'he had not needed that addition to make his

[1] Vol. ii. p. 152.

lonely journey abundantly sombre.' Yet he had been innocent as a child.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle, Manchester.

Scotsbrig, September 4, 1851.

That of the cigar, at which you showed so much offence, not much to my consolation on the way homewards, was an attempt on my part to whisper to you that I had given the maid half a crown, nothing more or other, as I am a living sinner. What you, in your kind assiduity, were aiming at, I in the frightful, hateful whirl of such a scene had not in the least noticed or surmised. You unkind woman, unfortunate with the best intentions, to send me off in that humour with such a *viaticum* through the manufacturing districts! I thought of it all day; yet *with sorrow*, not with anger, if you will believe me.

How many of Carlyle's imagined delinquencies in this department may not have been equally explicable! Of late years, even with her he had grown shy and awkward; meaning always well, and failing in manner from timidity. At Scotsbrig he soothed himself with the 'Life of Chalmers.' 'An excellent Christian man,' he said. 'About as great a contrast to himself in all ways as could be found in these epochs under the same sky.' He found his mother not ill, but visibly sinking. She had divined that all was not as well in Cheyne Row as it ought to be. Why had not Mrs. Carlyle come too, to see her before she died? She said over and over again, 'I wad ha' liked well to see Janie ance mair.' All else was still and peaceful. The air, the home faces, the honest, old-fashioned life, did for him what Malvern and Gully could not do. The noise of the outside world reached him only as an echo, and he was only provoked a little when its disturbances came into his close neighbourhood.

Father Gavazzi (he says, in a letter of September 10) is going to harangue them (at Dumfries) to-morrow in Italian, which one would think must be an extremely unprofitable operation for all but the *Padre* himself. This blockhead, nevertheless, is actually making quite a *furore* at Glasgow and all over the west country, such is the anti-Popish humour of the people. They take him for a kind of Italian Knox (God help them!), and one ass, whom I heard the bray of in some Glasgow newspaper, says, 'He strikingly reminds you of our grand hater of shams, T. Carlyle.' Certainly a very striking resemblance indeed! Oh, I am sick of the stupidity of mankind—a *servum pecus*. I had no idea till late times what a bottomless fund of darkness there is in the human animal, especially when congregated in masses, and set to build Crystal Palaces, &c., under King Cole, Prince Albert and Company. The profoundest Orcus or belly of chaos itself, this *is* the emblem of them.

Scotsbrig lasted three weeks. There had been an old arrangement that Carlyle should spend a few days at Paris with the Ashburtons. Lord and Lady Ashburton were now there, and wrote to summon him to join them. At such a command the effort seemed not impossible. He went to London, joined Browning at the South Eastern Railway station, and the same evening found him at Meurice's. The first forty-eight hours were tolerable: 'nothing to do except amuse himself,' which he thought could be borne for a day or two. Lord Ashburton of course saw everyone that was worth seeing. 'Thiers came the second afternoon and talked *immense* quantities of watery enough vain matter.' Thiers was followed by two other 'men of letters,' 'one Mérimée,' 'one Laborde,' *Nichts zu bedeuten*. The third and fourth nights sleep unfortunately failed, with the usual consequences. He grew desperate, 'found that he had made a fruitless jump into a Red Sea of mud.'

The last remains of his patience vanished when Mérimée dared to say that he 'thought Goethe an inferior French apprentice.' This was enough of literature. He packed his bag and fled home to Chelsea. He had better have stayed out his time at Scotsbrig. On his arrival he recorded his Paris adventures in his Journal.

Went to Paris for a week, travelling with the Brownings, and got nothing by the business but confusion, pain, disappointment; total (or almost total) want of sleep; and, in fine, returned home by express train and Calais packet in one day; glad beyond all things, and almost incredulous of the fact, to find myself in my own bed again, in my own poor hut again, with the prospect of arrangements that suited me a little. Saw at Paris, besides English people of high name, but small significance, Thiers several times—not expressly visiting me—a lively little Provençal figure, not dislikeable, very far from *estimable* in any sense: item, Mérimée—wooden pedant, not without conciseness, pertinency, and a certain sarcastic insight—on the whole, no mortal of the slightest interest or value to me. To be at the trouble of speaking a foreign language (so ill) with such people on such topics as ours was a perpetual burden to me. Had letters to some others, but burnt them. Found some interest in looking over the physical aspects of Paris again, and contrasting it and myself with what had existed twenty-six years before. The town had a dirty unswept look still; otherwise was much changed for the better. Ride in the Bois de Boulogne with Lord Ashburton, horses swift and good, furnished by an Englishman—nothing else worth much—roads all in dust-whirlwinds, with omnibuses and scrubby vehicles; the Bois itself nearly solitary, and with a soft sandy riding-course; otherwise dirty, unkempt, a smack of the sordid grating everywhere on one's ill-humour. Articulate-speaking France was altogether without beauty or meaning to me in my then diseased mood; but I saw traces of the inarticulate, industrial, &c., being the true France and much worthier.

CHAPTER XX.

A.D. 1851–2. ÆT. 56–57.

Purpose formed to write on Frederick the Great—The author of the 'Handbook of Spain'—Afflicting visitors—Studies for 'Frederick'—Visit to Linlathen—Proposed tour in Germany—Rotterdam—The Rhine—Bonn—Homburg—Frankfurt—Wartburg—Luther reminiscences—Weimar—Berlin—Return to England.

For several years now, with the exception of the short interval when he wrote Sterling's life, Carlyle had been growling in print and talk over all manner of men and things. The revolutions of 1848 had aggravated his natural tendencies. He had thought ill enough before of the modern methods of acting and thinking, and had foreseen that no good would come of them. The universal crash of European society had confirmed his convictions. He saw England hurrying on to a similar catastrophe. He had lifted up his voice in warning, and no one would listen to him, and he was irritated, disappointed, and perhaps surprised at the impotence of his own admonitions. To go on with them, to continue railing like Timon, was waste of time and breath; and time and breath had been given to him to use and not to waste. His best resource, he knew, was to engage with some subject large enough and difficult enough to take up all his attention, and he had fixed at last

on Frederick of Prussia. He had discerned for one thing that Prussia, in those days of tottering thrones, was, or would be, the centre of European stability, and that it was Frederick who had made Prussia what she was. It was an enormous undertaking; nothing less than the entire history, secular and spiritual, of the eighteenth century. He was not one of those easy writers who take without inquiry the accredited histories, and let their own work consist in hashing and seasoning and flavouring. He never stated a fact without having himself gone to the original authority for it, knowing what facts suffer in the cooking process. For Carlyle to write a book on Frederick would involve the reading of a mountain of books, memoirs, journals, letters, state papers. The work with Cromwell would be child's play to it. He would have to travel over a large part of Germany, to see Berlin and Potsdam, to examine battle-fields and the plans of campaigns. He would have to make a special study, entirely new to him, of military science and the art of war; all this he would have to do, and do it thoroughly, for he never went into any work by halves. He was now fifty-six years old, and might well pause before such a plunge. Frederick himself, too, was not a man after Carlyle's heart. He had 'no piety' like Cromwell, no fiery convictions, no zeal for any 'cause of God,' real or imagined. He lived in an age when sincere spiritual *belief* had become difficult, if not impossible. But he had one supreme merit, that he was not a hypocrite: what he did not feel he did not pretend to feel. Of cant—either conscious cant, or the 'sincere cant' which Carlyle found to be so loathsome in England—there was in

Frederick absolutely none. He was a man of supreme intellectual ability. One belief he had, and it was the explanation of his strength—a belief in *facts*. To know the fact always exactly as it was, and to make his actions conform to it, was the first condition with him; never to allow facts to be concealed from himself, or distorted, or pleasantly flavoured with words or spurious sentiments; and therefore Frederick, if not a religious man, was a true man, the nearest approach to a religious man that Carlyle believed perhaps to be in these days possible. He might not be true in the sense that he never deceived others. Politicians, with a large stake upon the board, do not play with their cards on the table. But he never, if he could help it, deceived himself; never hid his own heart from himself by specious phrases, or allowed voluntary hallucinations to blind his eyes, and thus he stood out an exceptional figure in the modern world. Whether at his age he could go through with such an enterprise was still uncertain to him; but he resolved to try, and on coming back from Paris sat down to read whatever would come first to hand. He did not recover his good-humour. Lady Ashburton invited Mrs. Carlyle to spend December with her at the Grange, to help in amusing some visitors. She did not wish to go, and yet hardly dared say no. She consulted John Carlyle.

> Heaven knows (she wrote) what is to be said from me individually. If I refuse this time, she will quarrel with me outright. That is her way; and as quarrelling with her would involve also quarrelling with Mr. C. it is not a thing to be done lightly. I wish I knew what to answer for the best.

Not a pleasant position for a wife, but she made the best of it and submitted. She went to the Grange. He stayed behind with Jomini and the Seven Years' War, patiently reading, attending to his health, dining out, seeing his friends, and at least endeavouring to recover some sort of human condition—even, as it seems, cleansing the Cheyne Row premises with his own hands.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle, at the Grange.

Chelsea: December 8, 1851.

On Saturday last in the morning I did what is probably my chief act of virtue since you went; namely, I decided not to walk, but to take water and a scrub-brush, and swash into some degree of tolerability those greasy clammy flags in the back area. I did it without rebuke of Anne. I said she couldn't do it in her present state of illness; and on the whole proceeded, and found it decidedly hard work for three-quarters of an hour. Some ten or twelve pails of water with vigorous scrubbing did, however, reduce the affair to order, whereupon I washed myself and sat down to breakfast in victorious peace. 'Dirt shall not be around me,' said Cobbett, 'so long as I can handle a broom.' Our weather here is now absolutely beautiful. I executed a deal of riding yesterday, and after near four hours' foot and horse exercise was at South Place little after time. 'Mutton chop with Ford?'[1] There was a grand dinner when I arrived *en frac*, Mrs. Ford, Lawrence, and the girls all dressed like tulips; Anthony (Sterling) himself in white waistcoat, all very grand indeed. I was really provoked, but said nothing. Happily I was clean as new snow, and had not come in my pilot jacket; and in short I could not help it. Ford, though a man without *humour* or any gracefulness or loveability of character,

[1] Author of the 'Handbook of Spain,' and parent of the whole handbook series.

is not the worst of men to dine with at all; has abundance of authentic information—not duller than Macaulay's, and much more certain and more social too—and talks away about Spanish wines, anecdotes, and things of Spain. I got away about eleven, not quite ruined, though not intending to go back soon.

December 11.

Do but think: I have had a letter from that bird-like, semi-idiot son of poor ——, thanking me for the mention of his father in 'Sterling,' and forwarding for my judgment a plan to renovate suffering society! a big printed piece with MS. annotations, accompaniments, &c.—an association to do it all. My answer was, in brief, 'A pack of damned nonsense, you unfortunate fool!'

December 12.

Last night, just as tea was in prospect, and the hope of a quiet, busy evening to a day completely *lost*, enter, with a loud knock, poor —— leading his little boy; a huge, hairy, good-humoured, stupid-looking fellow the size of a house gable, and all over with hair, except a little patch on the crown, which was bald; the boy noisy, snappish, and inclined to be of himself intolerable. I gave them tea, tried to talk. Poor —— has no talent. You expect good-humoured *idiomatic* simplicity at least, and you do not get even that. He turns like a door on a hinge from every kind of opinion or assertion, and is a colossus of gossamer. They bored me to death, and at half-past nine, to complete the matter, Saffi[1] enters. Oh, heavens! the whole night, like the day, was a painful wreck for the rational soul of man.

Afflictions would come, but Carlyle's essentially kind heart put up with them. He had to secure himself more effectually before he could make progress with Frederick, which still hung before him uncertain. He joined his wife at the Grange in the middle of the month, and stayed out the year there.

[1] Friend of Mazzini; ex-triumvir of Rome.

Journal.

January, 1852.—Took to reading about Frederick the Great soon after my return from Paris, at which work, with little definite prospect or even object—for I am grown very poor in hope and resolution now—I still continue. Was at the Grange before and till New Year's Day, three weeks in all, Jane five weeks—rode daily, got no other good—Lords Lansdowne and Grey; Thackeray, Macaulay, Twisleton, Clough, a huge company coming and going. Lonely I, solitary almost as the dead. Infinitely glad to get home again to a *slighter* measure of dyspepsia, inertia, and other heaviness, ineptitude, and gloom. Keep reading Frederick. Precise, exact, copious, dullest of men, Archenholtz (my first German book near thirty years ago), Jomini, Lloyd, and now Frederick's own writings. I make slow progress, and am very sensible how *lame* I now am in such things. *Hope* is what I now want. Hope is as if dead within me for most part; which makes me affect solitude and wish much, if wishing were worth aught, that I had even one serious intelligent man to take counsel with, and communicate my thoughts to. But this is weak, so no more of this; know what the inevitable years have brought thee, and reconcile thyself to it. An unspeakable grandeur withal sometimes shines out of all this, like eternal light across the scandalous London fogs of time. Patience! courage! steady, steady! Sterling's Life out, and even second edition of it—very well received as a piece of writing and portrait-painting. *Was bedeutet's aber?* Religious reviews, I believe, are in a terrible humour with me and it. Don't look at one of them. Various foolish letters about it. 'Latter-day Pamphlets' have turned nine-tenths of the world dreadfully against me—*und das auch, was bedeutet's?* Can Frederick be my next subject—or what?

Six months now followed of steady reading and excerpting. He went out little, except to ride in the afternoons, or walk at midnight when the day's work was over. A few friends were admitted occasionally

to tea. If any called before, he left them to his wife and refused to be disturbed. I was then living in Wales, and saw and heard nothing of him except in some rare note. In the Journal there are no entries of consequence except the characteristic one of April 1.

You talk fondly of 'immortal memory,' &c. But it is not so. Our memory itself can only hold a certain quantity. Thus for every new thing that we remember, there must some old thing go out of the mind; so that here, too, it is but death and birth in the old fashion, though on a wider scale and with singular difference in the *longevities*. Longevities run from 3,000 years or more to nine days or less; but otherwise death at last is the common doom.

The temper does not seem to have much mended. There were small ailments and the usual fretfulness under them. When June came he sent his mother a flourishing account of himself, but his wife added a sad-merry postscript as a corrective:—

June 5.

It is quite true that he is done with that illness, and might have been done with it much sooner if he had treated himself with ordinary sense. I am surprised that so good and sensible a woman as yourself should have brought up her son so badly that he should not know what patience and self-denial mean—merely observing 'Thou'st gey ill to deal wi'.' Gey ill indeed, and always the longer the worse. When he was ill this last time, he said to Anne (the servant) one morning, 'I should like tea for breakfast this morning, *but you need not hurry*.' The fact was, he was purposing to wash all over with soap and water; but Anne didn't know that, and thought he must be dangerously ill, that he should ever have thought of saying *you needn't hurry*. 'It was such an unlikely thing for the master to say, that it quite made flesh creep.' You see the kind of thing we still go on with.

He had decided on going to Germany in August. With the exception of the yacht trip to Ostend, he had never been beyond Paris. Mrs. Carlyle had never been on the Continent at all; and the plan was for them to go both together. Repairs were needed in the house again. He was anxious to complete a portion of his reading before setting out, and fancied that this time he could stay and live through the noise; but the workmen when they came in were too much for him. She undertook to remain and superintend as usual. He had to fly if he would not be driven mad—fly to Scotland, taking his books with him; perhaps to his friend Mr. Erskine.

To Thomas Erskine, Linlathen.

Chelsea: July 12, 1852.

Dear Mr. Erskine,—I foresee that, by stress of weather and of other evil circumstances, I shall, in spite of my reluctance and inertia, be driven out of this shelter of mine—where I have already fled into the topmost corner with a few books; and, aided by a watering-pot, would so gladly defend myself as at first I hoped to do. The blaze of heat is almost intolerable to everybody; and alas! we, in addition, have the house full of workers, armed with planes, saws, pickaxes, dust-boxes, mortar-hods, the two upper storeys getting a 'complete repair' which hitherto fills everything with noise, dust, confusion, and premonitions of despair. I foresee, especially if this hot weather holds, that I shall have to run. My wife, who is architect and factotum, will retire to some neighbour's house and sleep; but cannot leave the ground till she *see* these two upper storeys made into her image of them. I have fled into a dressing-room far aloft; sit there very busy with certain books, also with watering-pot, which, all carpets &c. being off, is a great help to me. Here I would so gladly hold out; but in spite of wholesome

and unwholesome inertias, shall too probably be obliged to fly. Whitherward? is now the question, and I am looking round on various azimuths to answer the same. Tell me, if you are, or are likely to be, tolerably solitary for a ten days at Linlathen, and about what time. A draught attracts me thither, so as to few other places. But alas! in *every* way there lie lions for me, weak in body and strong in imagination as I am. It seems sometimes as if, could you leave me daily six hours strictly private for my German reading, and send me down once a day to bathe in your glorious sea, I could try well not to be sulky company at other hours, and might do very well beside so friendly a soul as yours is to me always. Tell me, at any rate, how you are situated, and regard this pious thought, whether it becomes an action or not, as proof of my quiet trust in you. Hearty good wishes to all.

Yours ever truly,

T. CARLYLE.

Erskine, who loved Carlyle and delighted in his company, responded with a hearty invitation, and on July 21, the weather still flaming hot, Carlyle dropped down the river in a boat from Chelsea to the Dundee steamer, which was lying in the Pool, his wife and Nero accompanying to see him off. She was delighted that he should go, for her own sake as well as for his. When he was clear off, she could go about her work with a lighter heart. She writes to tell John Carlyle of his brother's departure, and goes on:—

Noise something terrific. In superintending all these men, I begin to find myself in the career open to my particular talents, and am infinitely more satisfied than I was in talking 'wits' in my white silk gown, with white feathers in my head, at soirées at Bath House, and all that sort of thing. It *is* such a consolation to be of some *use*, though it is only in helping stupid carpenters and bricklayers out

of their impossibilities, &c.; especially when the *ornamental* no longer succeeds with one as well as it has done. The fact is, I am remarkably indifferent to *material* annoyances, considering my morbid sensitiveness to *moral* ones; and when Mr. C. is not here recognising it with his overwhelming eloquence, I can regard the present earthquake as something almost laughable.

He meanwhile was reporting his successful arrival in Fife.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Linlathen: July 23, 1852.

You and Nero vanishing amid the ships of the Pool were a *wae* kind of sight to me in my then and subsequent condition of imagination. . . . I got on very well in the steamer, was nearly *utterly* silent, found everybody civil, and everything tolerably what it should be. The weather was of the best. That first evening, with the ships all hanging in it at the Thames mouth like black shadows on a ground of crimson, was a sight to make anybody give way to the picturesque for a few minutes. I passed almost all my time in reading; smoked too, and looked with infinite sorrow, yet not unblessed or angry sorrow, into the continent of chaos, as is my sad wont on such occasions. I contrived to get a berth, by good management, where I had a door to shut upon myself, and a torrent of wind running over me all night, where accordingly I managed to sleep tolerably well both nights, and am really better, rather than worse. Give Nero a crumb of sugar in my name.

July 26.

Thanks, many thanks, for the note I got this morning. You know not what a crowd of ugly confusions it delivered me from, or what black webs I was weaving in my chaotic thoughts while I heard nothing from you here . . . for I am terribly bilious, though it might be hard to say why; everything is so delightfully kind and appropriate here—weather, place, people, bedroom, treatment all so much 'better than I deserve. But one's imagination is a black smithy of the

Cyclops, where strange things are incessantly forged. . . The good Thomas and all the rest religiously respect my six hours, and hitherto I have always got a fair day's work done. I sit in my big high bedroom, hear nothing but the sough of woods, have a window flung clean up, go out and smoke at due intervals, as at home, &c. In fact, I am almost too well cared for and attended to. The only evil is that they will keep me in talk. Alas! how much happier I should be not talking or talked to! I require an effort to get my victuals eaten for talk.

This was too good to last. Carlyle would not have been Carlyle if he had been even partially contented for a week together. The German problem seemed frightful as the time drew on. Travelling of all kinds was horrible to him. 'Frederick was no sufficient inducement to lead him into such sufferings and expenses.' 'Shall we cower into some nearest hole,' he said, 'and leave Germany to the winds? I am very weary of all locomotion, of all jargon talk with my indifferent brethren of mankind. "She said, I am a-weary, a-weary." I am very, very weary, truly so could I say; and the Rankes, Varnhagens, and other gabbling creatures one will meet there are not very inviting.' Linlathen itself became tedious: he admitted that all the circumstances were favourable—the kindest of hosts, the best of lodging; 'but the wearisome was in permanence there.' It was only by keeping as much alone as possible that he managed to get along. 'Oh, Goody!' he cried, 'have pity on me and be patient with me; my heart is very lonely sometimes in this world.' They would make him talk, that was the offence; yet it was his own fault. His talk was so intensely interesting, so intensely entertaining. No one who heard him flowing

on could have guessed at the sadness which weighed upon him when alone. Those bursts of humour, flashing out amidst his wild flights of rhetoric, spoke of anything but sadness; even the servants at places where he dined had to run out of the room, choking down their laughter. The *comic* and the *tragic* lie close together, inseparable like light and shadow, as Socrates long ago forced Aristophanes himself to acknowledge. He escaped to Scotsbrig after a fortnight with the Erskines, and there he hoped his wife would join him. But the work at Cheyne Row lingered on, and was far from completion. He felt that he ought to go to Germany; yet he was unwilling to leave her behind him. She had looked forward with some eagerness to seeing a foreign country, and Carlyle knew it. 'You surely deserve this one little pleasure,' he said; 'there are so few you can get from me in this world.' To himself it would be no pleasure at all. 'Curtainless beds, noisy, sleepless nights' were frightful to contemplate. He, individually, was 'disheartened, dyspeptical, contemptible in some degree;' still, for her sake, and for the little bit of duty he could get done, he was ready to encounter the thing. Especially he wished her to come to him at Scotsbrig. She had held aloof of late years, since things had gone awry. 'My poor old mother,' he wrote, 'comes in with her sincere, anxious old face: "Send my love to Jane, and tell her" (this with a wae-ish tone) "I would like right weel to have a crack[1] wi' her ance mair."'

Mrs. Carlyle was still unable to come away from Chelsea, but she was alarmed at the extreme depres-

[1] *Crack*, conversation.

sion of his letters. He reassured her as well as he could.

August 12.

Don't bother yourself (he said) about my health and spirits. That is not worse at all than usual; nay, rather it is better, especially to-day, after a capital sleep—my best for six weeks; nor is the gloom in my mind a whit increased. It is the nature of the beast; and he lives in a continual element of black, broken by lightnings, and cannot help it, poor devil!

He concluded that he must go to Germany. She, if things were well, might come out afterwards, and join him in Silesia. He found that 'he did not care much for Frederick after all;' but 'it would be disgraceful to be beaten by mere travelling annoyances.'

My own private perception (he said, a few days later) is that I shall *have* to go—that I shall actually be shovelled out to-morrow week into a Leith steamer for Rotterdam, a result which I shudder at, but see not how to avoid with the least remnant of honour. I wait, however, for your next letter, and the candid description of your own capabilities to join me, especially the *when* of that; and, on the whole, am one 'coal of burning sulphur'—one heap, that is to say, of chaotic miseries, horrors, sorrows, and imbecilities, actually rather a contemptible man. But the ass does swim, I sometimes say, if you fling him fairly into the river, though he brays lamentably at being flung. Oh, my Goody! my own, or not my own, Goody! is there no help at all, then?

Letter followed letter, in the same strain. It was not jest, it was not earnest; it was a mere wilfulness of humour. He told her not to mind what he said; 'it was the mere grumbling incidental to dyspepsia and the load of life. It was, on the whole, the nature of the beast, and was to be put up with, as the wind and the rain.' She had to decide, perhaps prudently,

that she could not go, either with him or after him. 'The wind and the rain,' with the aggravation of travelling, would probably rise to a height. He himself was heartily disappointed. 'I do grudge,' he said, 'to go to Germany without you, and feel as if half the scheme were gone on that account.' He was a little ashamed, too. It was harvest-time at Scotsbrig, and men and women were all busy with the shearing.

These rugged Annandale shearers (he said) ought to put a *Kopfhänger* like me to shame. In Germany, whether I *slept* or not, the odious captivity to indolence, incompetence, and do-nothingism which encircles me at present would be cast off at least. Life anywhere will *swallow* a man, unless he rise and vigorously try to swallow *it*.

He gathered himself together for the effort. On August 25 he wrote:—

Last night I slept much better, and, indeed, except utter dispiritment and indolent confusion, there is nothing essential that ails me. 'Jist plain mental awgony in my ain inside,' that is all; which I can in a great manner cure whenever I like to rise and put my finger in the pipie o' t.

And on the 27th:—

Yesternight, before sunset, I walked solitary to Stockbridge hill top, the loneliest road in all Britain, where you go and come some three miles without meeting a human soul. Strange, earnest light lay upon the mountain-tops all round, strange clearness; solitude as if personified upon the near bare hills, a silence everywhere as if premonitory of the grand eternal one. I took out your letters and read them over again, but I did not get much exhilaration there either. On the whole, I was very sore of heart, and pitied my poor Jeannie heartily for all she suffers; some of it that I can mend and will; some that I cannot so well, and can only try. God bless thee ever, dear Jeannie! that is my heart's prayer, go where I may, do or suffer what I may.

All this came from his heart, and she knew it well. She never doubted his heart; but, in the midst of his emotions, he had forgotten his passport, and had to instruct her to go with the utmost haste to the proper quarters to procure one, and she would have desired him to feel less and to consider more.

It is much to be wished (she wrote to his brother) that Mr. C. could learn not to leave everything to the last moment, throwing everybody about him, as well as himself, into the most needless flurry. I am made quite ill with that passport; had to gallop about in street-cabs *by the hour*, like a madwoman, and lost two whole nights' sleep in consequence—the first from anxiety, the second from fatigue.

All was settled at last—resolution, passport, and everything else that was required; and on Sunday, August 30, Carlyle found himself 'on board the greasy little wretch of a Leith steamer, laden to the water's edge with pig-iron and herrings,' bound for the country whose writers had been the guides of his mind, and whose military hero was to be the subject of his own greatest work. He reached Rotterdam at noon on September 1. He was not to encounter the journey alone. Mr. Neuberg was to join him there, a German admirer, a gentleman of good private fortune, resident in London, who had volunteered his services to conduct Carlyle over the Fatherland, and afterwards to be his faithful assistant in the 'Frederick' biography. In both capacities Neuberg was invaluable, and Carlyle never forgot his obligation to him. His letters are the diary of his adventures. They are extremely long, and selections only can be given here. He went first to Bonn, to study a few books before going farther.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle, Chelsea.

Bonn: Sunday, September 6, 1852.

Thank thee very much, dear Jeannie, for the letter of yesterday, which lay waiting to refresh me in the afternoon when I returned from my dusty labours in the library here. It seemed to me the kindest I had got from you this long while, almost like the old ones I used to get; and any letter at all, so anxious and impatient had I grown, would have been right welcome. My journey has had nothing that was not pleasant and lucky hitherto. At Bonn here, on my arrival, there lay nothing for me except a note from Lady Ashburton, enclosing the introduction from Lord A. to the Ambassador at Berlin—not a first-rate comfort to me. I must, or should, acknowledge it to-day; but writing of all kinds in these sad biliary circumstances, with half-blind eyes, and stooping over low rickety tables, is perfectly unpleasant to me. . . . Well, but let me say I got beautifully up the Rhine; stuck by the river all day, all night, and the second afternoon found Neuberg waiting here on the beach for me. Alas! at Rotterdam I had slept simply none at all, such was the force of noisy nocturnal travellers, neighbours *snoring*, and the most industrious *cocks* I ever heard. The custom-house officers, too, had spoilt the lock of my portmanteau, and, on the whole, I was in such a whirl of storm-tost flurries and confusions—God help me, wretched, thin-skinned mortal that I am! At five a.m. next morning I was in a precious humour to rise, and settle with unintelligible waiters and German steamboat clerks, and get myself, on any terms, on board. On board I got, however, and the place proved infinitely better than I hoped; some approach to Christian food to be had in it, some real sleep even; indeed, the principal sleep I have *yet* had since Friday gone a week was four hours, and again four hours, deep, deep, lying on the cabin sofas, amid the general noises, in that respectable vessel. I spoke German too, being the one Englishman on board, made agreeable acquaintances, &c. &c. The Rhine, of a vile reddish-drab colour, and all cut into a reticulary work

of branches, flowing through an absolutely flat country, *lower* than itself, was far from beautiful about Rotterdam, and for a fifty miles higher, but it was highly curious, and worth seeing once in a way; a country covered with willows, bulrushes, and rich woods, kept from drowning by windmill pumps. One looked with astonishment upon it, and with admiration at the invincible industry of man. Higher up (towards four p.m. of the first day) the river gets decidedly agreeable; and about Cologne, twenty miles below this, a beautiful mountain group, *Sieben Gebirge*, the Seven Hills, which are still some five or seven miles beyond us *here*, announces that the 'picturesque' is just going to enter on the scene. Much good may it do us! We had beautiful weather all the way, and yet have. But surely the most picturesque of all objects was that of Neuberg, standing on the beach here to take me out of all that puddle of foreign things, and put me down, as I hoped, in some place where I might sleep and do nothing else for several days to come.

Neuberg's kindness nothing can exceed; but as to the rest of it, as to sleep in particular, I find the hope to have been somewhat premature. Oh heavens! I wonder if the Devil anywhere ever contrived such beds and bedrooms as these same are. And two cocks are industrious day and night under the back window, &c. &c. But, upon the whole, I *have* slept every night here more or less, and am decidedly learning to do it; and Neuberg asserts that I shall become expert by-and-by.

Yesterday, as my first day's work, I went to the University Library here; found very many good books unknown to me hitherto on Vater Fritz; took down the titles of what on inspection promised to be useful; brought home some twenty away with me, and the plan at present is that N. and I shall go with them to a rural place in the Sieben Gebirge, called Roland's Eck, for one week, where sleep is much more possible, and there examine my twenty books before going farther, and consider what is the best to be done farther.

September 9.

A letter from my Jeannie will surely be one of the joyfullest occurrences that can befall me in these strange, sleepless, nervous, indescribable foreign parts. Oh, my own dear little soul, would to God I were in our own little cabin again, even in sooty London, since not under the free sky anywhere! That would be such a blessing; and it seems to me I shall be rather unwilling to get upon the road *again* were I once fairly home.

Last Sunday when I ended we were just going to Roland's Eck, a terrestrial Paradise and water-cure which Neuberg and the world recommended as every way eligible. Well, the little journey took effect, though under difficulties and mismanagements. But the 'place'! It was beautiful exceedingly; but it was as little like sleeping in as Cremorne Gardens might be, and I turned back from it with horror. Home again, therefore, in the cool dusk, and next day trial of a small, sequestered village called Hunef, at the foot of the Sieben Gebirge, on the other side of the river, where N. went to seek a lodging for me in which human sleep might be possible. Not entirely to distress the good N., I consented, though with shuddering reluctance, to try one of his eligiblest places, and accordingly I packed on the morrow and proceeded thither to take possession. What a nice long letter I proposed to write to my poor Goody out of that strange place, the heart of a real German *Dörflein* in the lap of the hills, when once I should have had a night's sleep! Neuberg waited in the inn till next morning to see how I should do. *Ach Gott!* of all the places ever discovered, even in Germany, that *Hundehof* surely was the most intolerable for noise. A bed, as everywhere in Germany, more like a butcher's tray or a big washing-tub than a bed, with pillows shaped like a wedge three feet broad, and a deep pit in the middle of the body, without vestige of curtains, the very windows curtainless, and needing to be kept wide open—for there is no fire-place or other hole at all—if you will have any air. There you will have to sleep or die, go where you will in this country.

Then for noise—loud gossip in the street till towards midnight, tremendous peals of bells from the village church (which seems to have been some cathedral, such force of bells is in it), close by one's head, watchman's horn of the loudness and tone of a jackass, and a general Sanhedrim apparently of all the cats and dogs of nature. That was my *Nachtlager* on the night of Tuesday, when, nevertheless, I did get about three hours' sleep, did greatly admire and esteem the good-natured, faithful ways of the poor villagers, smoked two or three times out of my window, and, on the whole, was not so unhappy at all, and had thoughts of my loved ones far away which were pious rather than otherwise.

Neuberg, at the meeting on the morrow, agreed that we must instantly get off towards Homburg, perhaps towards Nassau, Ems, &c., but always ultimately through Frankfurt. At Homburg, if at no other of these places, a week's quiet reading might be possible, and he could send the books back to Bonn. . . . So stands it, then: to-morrow at eight we sail, pass Coblentz towards Frankfurt. One can get out and stay where one likes.

Some professors have come athwart me—none that I could avoid—'miserable creatures lost in statistics.' Old Arndt, a sturdy old fellow of eighty-three, with open face, loud voice, and the liveliest hazel eyes, is the only one I got even momentary good of. *Io non cerco nessuno*, and find *Gelehrten* in particular less and less charming to me. The river is grand and broad, the country rather picturesque and very fertile and pleasant, though the worst-cultivated in creation, a Lothian farmer would say; the people *sonsie*, industrious, in their stupid way, and agreeable to look on, though tending towards ugliness. Tobacco perpetually burning everywhere. Many Jews abroad. Travellers, if not English, are apt to be rich Jews, with their Jewesses, I think. Neuberg is not bright, but full of kindness and solid sense. Let not my poor Goody fret herself about me. I am really wonderfully well, in spite of these outer tribulations and dog concerts, and doubt not I shall do my journey without damage if I take care.

Homburg: September 15.

We did get out of Bonn fairly on Friday morning. At first wettish, but which dried and brightened by degrees. . . . Of the Rhine you shall hear enough by-and-by. It is verily a 'noble river,' much broader than the Thames at full tide, and rolling along many feet in depth, with banks quite trim, at a rate of four or five miles an hour, *without voice*, but full of boiling eddies, the most magnificent image of silent power I have seen; and, in fact, one's first idea of a world-river. This broad, swift sheet, rolling strong and calm in silent rage for three or four hundred miles, is itself far the grandest thing I have seen here or shall likely see. But enough of it. Neuberg and I got out at Coblentz that Friday about 2 p.m., and, by N.'s suggestion, put ourselves in the coupé of an Ems omnibus—*Bad* Ems, ten miles off, up a side valley, east side, there to try for a quiet sleeping-place and day for excerpting German books; which really answered well. Ems is the strangest place you ever saw—Matlock; but a far steeper set of rocks close to rear; in front a river equal to Nith; and half a mile of the brightest part of Rue de Rivoli (say Regent's Quadrant) set into it; a place as from the opera direct, and inhabited by devil's servants chiefly. Of it enough in winter evenings that are coming. We got the quietest lodging perhaps in Germany (not very quiet either), at the farther end of the place; and there, in spite of cocks, I got one night's sleep and two half-ones, and did all my bits of books, and shall not undertake any similar job while here. Better buy the books in general and bring them home to read. At Ems we saw Russians gambling every evening; heard music by the riverside among fantastic promenades and Regent's Quadrant edifices, and devil's-servant people every evening, every morning. Saw a dance, too, unforgetable by man; in fine, drove in cheap *cuddy* vehicle on Sunday evening up to Nassau (Burg Nassau, the birthplace of William the Silent and other heroes). A kind of pious pilgrimage which I am glad to have done. At the top of the high tower, on a high, woody hill, one has of course a 'view' not worth much to

me. But I entered my name in their album, and plucked that one particle of flower on the tip top of all, which I now send to thee. Next morning we left Ems, joined our steamboat at Coblentz, and away again to the sublime portions of the Rhine country: very sublime indeed, really worth a sight. Say a hundred miles of a Loch Lomond, or half Loch Lomond, all rushing on at five miles an hour, and with queer old towers and ruined castles on the banks; a grand silence, too, and grey day adding to one's sadness of mood; for 'a fine sorrow,' not coarse, is the utmost I can bring it to in this world usually. Beyond Coblentz our boat was too crowded; nasty people several of them, French mainly; stupid and polite, English mainly. There was a sprinkling of Irish, too, 'looking at the vine-clad hills,' as I heard them lilting and saying.

Neuberg guided and guides, and does for me as only a third power of courier reinforced by loyalty and friendship could. Bless him! the good and sensible but wearisome and rather heavy man! At Maintz at dusk it was decidedly pleasant to get out and have done with the Rhine, which had now grown quite flat on either side, and full of islands with willows, not to speak of chained (anchored) cornmills, &c. Maintz and Faust of Maintz we had to survey by cat's-light—good enough for us and it, I fancy. In fine, about ten the railway, twenty miles or so, brought us to Frankfurt, and the wearied human tabernacle, in well-waxed wainscoted upper apartments in the 'Dutch Hof,' prepared itself to court repose; not with the best prospects, for the street or square was still rattling with vehicles, and indeed continued to do so, and we left it rattling. Of the night's sleep we had as well say nothing. I remembered Goody and the Malvern inn gate, and endeavoured to possess my soul in patience. In shaving next morning, with my face to the Square, which was very lively, and had trees in the middle, I caught, with the corner of my eye, sight of a face which was evidently Goethe's. *Ach Gott!* merely in *stone*, in the middle of the Platz among the trees. I had so longed to see that face alive; and here it was given to me at last, as if

with huge world irony, in stone, an emblem of so much that happens. This also gave me a moment's genial sorrow, or something of that sort.

From Bonn I had written to Mephisto M—— at Weimar. Behold, one of the first faces the morning offered me at Frankfurt was that of M—— himself, who had come in person to meet us the night before, and had been at the Post Office and all inns, the friendly ugly little man! He was quite desolate to hear I could not stop at Weimar or any place beyond one day for want of sleep. He went about with us everywhere, and at first threatened to be rather a burden; but by degrees grew to be manageable and rather useful, till we dined together and parted on our own several routes. He is gone round by Würzburg, &c., to Weimar, and is to expect us there about Saturday. His Grand Duke and Duchess are in Italy. Eckermann himself is at Berlin—one day may very well suffice in Berlin.

At Frankfurt yesterday after breakfast we saw—weariedly I—all manner of things. Goethe's house—were in Goethe's room, a little garret not much bigger than my dressing-room—and wrote our names 'in silence.' The Judengasse, grimmest section of the Middle Ages and their pariahood I ever saw. The Römer where old Kaisers were all elected. On the whole a stirring, strange, old Teutonic town, all bright with paint and busy trade. The fair still going on under its booths of small trash in some squares. Finally we mounted to the top of the Pfarrkirche steeple—oldest church, highest steeple—318 steps, and then M—— called for and got a bottle of beer, being giddy, poor soul! and we aided in drinking the same (I to a cigar) and composedly surveying Frankfurt city and the interior parts of Germany as far as possible. At 5 p.m. Neuberg put me into an omnibus—vile crowded airless place—and in two hours brought me here in quest of an old lodging he had had, 'the quietest in the world,' where we *were* lucky enough to find a floor unoccupied, and still are, for at least one other day. As I said, my book-excerpting, *taliter qualiter*, is as good as done; and the place is really quite rustic, out at the very end of Homburg,

and that by narrow lanes. I see nothing here but fields, and hear nothing but our own internal noises. Last night accordingly I expected sleep. Alas! our upper floor lodgers took ill—Devil mend them!—and my sleep was nothing to crack of. In fact I have renounced the hope of getting any considerable sleep in Germany. I shall snatch nightly, it may be hoped, a few hours, half a portion, out of the black dog's throat; and let every disturbance warn me more and more to be *swift* in my motions, to restrict myself to the indispensable, and to hurry *home*, there to sleep. I calculate there will but little good come to me from this journey. Reading of books I find to be impossible. The thing that I can do is to see certain places and to see if I can gather certain books. Wise people also to talk with, or inquire of, I as good as despair of seeing. *All* Germans, one becomes convinced, are not wise! On the whole, however, one cannot but like this honest-hearted hardy population, very coarse of feature for most part, yet seldom radically *hässlich*; a *sonsie* look rather: and very frugal, good-humouredly poor in their way of life.

Of Homburg proper—which is quite out of sight and hearing, yet within five minutes' walk—N. and I took survey last night. A public set of rooms—*Kursaal* they call such things, finer than some palaces, all supported by gambling, all built by one French gambling *entrepreneur*, and such a set of damnable faces—French, Italian, and Russian, with dull English in quantities—as were never seen out of Hell before! Augh! It is enough to make one turn cannibal. An old Russian countess yesternight sat playing *Gowpanfuls* of gold pieces every stake, a figure I shall never forget in this world. One of the first I saw risking coin at an outer table was Lord —— almost a beauty here, to whom I did not speak. Afterwards in music-room—also the gambling *entrepreneur's*, as indeed everything here is—the poor old Duke of Augustenburg hove in sight. On him I ought to call if I can find spirits. Oh, what a place for human creatures to flock to! Och! Och! The taste of the waters is nasty, Seltzer, but stronger—as Ems is too, only hot. On the whole,

if this is the last of German *Badeörter* I ever see, I shall console myself.

The next letter is to his mother dated from Weimar, September 19. She, he well knew, if she cared for nothing else, would care to hear about the Luther localities. She had a picture of Luther in her room at Scotsbrig. He was her chief Saint in the Christian calendar. After describing briefly the early part of his journey as far as Homburg, which he calls the 'rallying-place of such a set of empty blackguards as are not to be found elsewhere in the world,' he tells how on his way to Cassel he stopped at Marburg, 'a strange, most ancient town, famed for some of Luther's operations and for being the Landgraf Philip of Hesse's place of residence.' He continues:—

The Landgraf's high old castle, where we loitered a couple of hours, is now a correction-house filled with criminals and soldiers. The chamber of conference between Luther, Zwingli, &c., is used for keeping hay. The next morning brought us from Cassel to Eisenach, with its Wartburg, where Luther lay concealed translating the Bible; and there I spent one of the most interesting forenoons I ever got by travelling. Eisenach is about as big as Dumfries, a very old town but well whitewashed, all built of brick and oak with red tile roofs of amazing steepness and several grim old swag-bellied steeples and churches and palatial residences rising conspicuous over them. It stands on a perfect plain by the side of a little river, plain smaller than Langholm and surrounded by hills which are not so high, yet of a somewhat similar character, and are all grassy and many of them thickly wooded. Directly on the s[illegible]th side of it there rises one hill, somewhat as Lockerbie hill is in height and position, but clothed with trim rich woods; all the way through which wind paths with prospect houses, &c. On the top of the hill stands the old Wartburg, which it takes you three-quarters of

an hour to reach; an old castle—Watch Castle is the name of it—near 800 years old, where there is still a kind of garrison kept, perhaps twenty men; though it does not much look like a fortress; what one sees from below being mainly two monstrous old houses, so to speak, with enormous roofs to them, comparable to two gigantic peat stacks set somewhat apart. There are other lower buildings that connect these when one gets up. There is also of course a wall all round—a donjon tower, standing like Repentance [1]—and the Duke of Weimar, to whom the place belongs, is engaged in restorations, &c., and has many masons employed on it just now. I heeded little of all they had to show, except Junker Georg's [2] chamber, which is in the nearest of the peat stacks, the one nearest Eisenach and close by the gate when you enter on your right hand. A short stair of old worn stone conducts you up. They open a door, you enter a little apartment, less than your best room at Scotsbrig, I almost think less than your smallest, a very poor low room with an old leaded lattice window; to me the most venerable of all rooms I ever entered. Luther's old oak table is there, about three feet square, and a huge fossil bone—vertebra of a mammoth—which served him for footstool. Nothing else now in the room did certainly belong to him; but these did. I kissed his old oak table, looked out of his window—making them open it for me—down the sheer castle wall into deep chasms, over the great ranges of silent woody mountains, and thought to myself, 'Here once lived for a time one of God's soldiers. Be honour given him!' Luther's father and mother, painted by Cranach, are here—excellent old portraits—the father's with a dash of thrift, contention, and worldly wisdom in his old judicious, peasant countenance, the mother particularly pious, kind, true, and motherly—a noble old peasant woman. There is also Luther's self by the same Cranach; a picture infinitely superior to what your lithograph would give a notion of; a bold effectual-looking rustic man, with brown

[1] The Tower of Repentance on Hoddam Hill. Carlyle illustrates throughout from localities near Ecclefechan which his mother would know.

[2] The name under which Luther passed when concealed there.

eyes and skin; with a dash of peaceable self-confidence and healthy defiance in the look of him. In fact one is called to forget the engraving in looking at this; and indeed I have since found the engraving is not from this, but from another Cranach, to which also it has no tolerable resemblance. But I must say no more of the Wartburg. We saw the place on the plaster where he threw his inkstand—the plaster is all cut out and carried off by visitors—saw the outer staircase which is close by the door where he speaks of often hearing the Devil make noises. Poor and noble Luther! I shall never forget this Wartburg, and am right glad I saw it.

That afternoon, there being no train convenient, we drove to Gotha in a kind of clatch—two-horsed—very cheap in these parts; a bright beautiful country and a bonny little town; belongs to Prince Albert's brother, more power to his elbow! There we lodged in sumptuous rooms in an old quiet inn; the very rooms where Napoleon lodged after being beaten at Leipzig. It seems I slept last night where he breakfasted, if that would do much for me. At noon we came off to Erfurt, a place of 30,000 inhabitants, and now a Prussian fortified town, all intersected with ditches of water for defence' sake. Streets very crooked, very narrow, houses with old overhanging walls, and still the very room in it where Martin Luther lived when a monk, and, one guide-book said, the very Bible he found in the Convent library and read in this cell. This of the Bible proved wrong. Luther's particular Bible is not here, but is said to be at Berlin. Nothing really of Luther's there except the poor old latticed window glazed in lead, the main panes round, and about the size of a biggish *snap*, all bound together by whirligig intervals. It looks out to the west, over mere old cloistered courts and roof-tops against a church steeple, and is itself in the second storey. Except this and Luther's old inkstand, a poor old oaken *boxie* with inkbottle and sand-case in it now hardly sticking together, there is nothing to be seen here that actually belonged to Luther. The walls are all covered over with texts, &c., in painted letters by a later hand. The ceiling also is ornamentally painted; and

indeed the place is all altered now, and turned long ago into an orphan asylum, much of the old building gone and replaced by a new of a different figure. On one wall of the room, however, is again a portrait of Luther by Cranach, and this I found on inspection was the one your engravers had been vainly aiming at. Vainly, for this too is a noble face; the eyes not turned up in hypocritical devotion, but looking out in profound sorrow and determination, the lips too gathered in stern but affectionate firmness. He is in russet yellow boots, and the collar of his shirt is small and edged with black.

So far about Luther. Though writing from Weimar, he was less minute in his account of the relics of Goethe.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Weimar: September 20, 1852.

Last night I sat long, till everything was quiet, in this *Gasthof zum Erbprinz*, writing to my mother all about Luther's localities. Those of to-day belong especially to you. I write within half a gun-shot of the Goethe'sche Haus and of the Schiller'sche. Our own early days are intertwined in a kind of pathetic manner with these two. At Homburg we had a quieter time than could have been expected—we stayed out our two days and three nights under tolerable circumstances. I finished my books and saw the Schloss, where are many interesting portraits, and a whole lot of books about Frederick, to the whole of which I might have had access without difficulty had it been my cue to stay, which it was not. I also saw the Augustenburgs, and spent an interesting hour with the good Duchess and her two sons and two daughters; in a very Babylonish condition as to *languages*, but otherwise quite pleasant and luminous. The old gentleman sat mostly silent, but looking genial; the Duchess, whose French seemed bad, and whose German was not clear to me, is a fine broad motherly woman. The girls, with their stiff English, were beautiful, clear-eyed, fair-

skinned creatures, and happy in spite of their exile; the sons ditto ditto. It was here that I first heard of Wellington's death, the night before we came away. Cassel is a large, dull town, and there, in the best inn, was such an arrangement for *sleeping* as—*Ach Himmel!* I shall not forget those cow-horns and '*Höret ihr Herren*' in a hurry. It was a night productive of 'pangs which were rather exquisite,' and nevertheless, some three hours of sleep on which one could proceed and say, 'It will not come back.' I had also the pleasure to see that Hassenpflug's—the tyrannous, traitorous court minion's—windows were broken as we drove past in the morning towards Eisenach, where again we halt for Luther's and the Wartburg's sake. Of all that you shall hear enough by-and-by—it was a real gain to me. I could not without worship look out of Luther's indubitable window, down into the sheer abysses over the castle wall, and far and wide out upon the woody multitude of hills; and reflect that here was authentically a kind of great man and a kind of holy place, if there were any such. In my torn-up, sick, exasperated humour I could have cried, but didn't. . . . Weimar —a little, bright enough place, smaller than Dumfries, with three steeples and totally without smoke—stands amid dull, undulating country; flat mostly, and tending towards ugliness, except for trees. We were glad to get to the inn, by the worst and slowest of *clatches*, and there procure some *chack* of dinner. Poor M—— had engaged me the 'quietest rooms in Germany,' ricketty, bare, crazy rooms, and with a noisy man snoring on the other side of the deal partition—yet really quiet in comparison, where I did sleep last night and hope to do this. M—— truly has been unwearied, would take me into Heaven if it depended on him. Good soul! I really am a little grateful, hard as my heart is; and ought to be ashamed that I am not more. Neuberg too—veritably he is better than six couriers, and is a friend over and above. People are very good to me.

Goethe's house, which was opened by *favour*, kept us occupied in a strange mood for two hours or more. Schiller's for one ditto. Everybody knows the Goethe'sche Haus; and

poor Schiller and Goethe here are dandled about and multiplied in miserable little bustkins and other dilettantisms, till one is sick and sad. G.'s house is quite like the picture, but one-third *smaller*; on the whole his effective *lodging* I found was small, low-roofed, and almost mean, to what I had conceived; hardly equal—nay, not at all equal, had my little architect once done her work—to my own at Chelsea. On the book-shelves I found the last book I ever sent Goethe—Taylor's 'Survey of German Poetry'; and a crumb of paper torn from some scroll of my own (Johnson, as I conjectured), still sticking in, after twenty years. Schiller's house was still more affecting; the room where he wrote, his old table, exactly like the model, the bed where he died, and a portrait of his dead face in it. A poor man's house, and a brave, who had fallen at his post there. *Eheu! Eheu!* what a world! I have since dined at M——'s with two Weimarese moderns. One of them is librarian here, of whom I shall get some use. But, oh Heavens! would that I were at home again. Want of sleep and 'raal mental awgony i' my ain inside,' do hold me in such pickle always. Quick, quick, and let us get it done!

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Nieder Rathen, near Dresden:
September 25, 1852.

I wrote to you from Weimar some five days ago, and therefore there is nothing pressing me at present to write; but, having a quiet hour here by the side of the Elbe river, at the foot of wild rock mountains in the queerest region you ever saw, I throw you another word, not knowing when I may have another chance as good. I am on the second floor in a little German country inn literally washed by the Elbe, which is lying in the moonshine as clear as a mirror and as silent. Right above us is a high peak called the *Bastei*, a kind of thing you are obliged to do. This we have *done*, and are to go to-morrow towards Frederick's first battle-field in the Seven Years' War; after which, the second day, if all go well, will bring us into Berlin. We came by an Elbe steamer, go on to-morrow by another steamer,

then by railway; and hope to *see*, though, alas! in quite confused circumstances and to little advantage, some of the actual footsteps of Father Fritz; for here too, amid these rocks, as well as farther on at Lobositz, he did feats. But let me tell in order, and take up my story where I left it.

The day after I wrote we were to leave Weimar; but lo, in the morning while we sat at breakfast, little M—— came in, looking highly animated, with letters from the *Schloss*, from the 'Grand Duchess,' from the, &c. In short, the said Grand Duchess—sister of the Czar Nicholas, and mother of the Duke, who was at Chelsea—had seen in the newspapers that one 'Carlyle' was among the arrivals. Could this be the *berühmte*, &c., in which case naturally he and his companion must *come to dinner;* and of course there could be no travelling that day. Well, we did go to dinner, saw how they *ackit*; a rather troublesome dramatic affair, of which you shall have full description when I return. Enough, it was very sublime, and altogether heartless, and even dull and dreary; but well worth doing for once. The Grand Duchess is towards sixty, slightly deaf, and has once been extremely pretty, though hard always as nails or diamonds. Her husband, a kind of imbecile man they say, *looks* extremely like a gentleman, and has an air of solemn serene vacuity, which is itself almost royal. I had to sit by the Duchess at dinner—three p.m. to five—and maintain with energy a singularly empty intellectual colloquy, in French chiefly, in English and in German. The lady being half-deaf withal, you may think how charming it was. She has a thin croaky voice; brow and chin recede; eyes are blue, small, and of the brightness and hardness of precious stones. *Ach Gott!* At last we got away, soon after five, and I for one was right charmed to think here is one thing done. But it must be owned the honour done me was to be recognised; and I was very glad to oblige poor Neuberg too by a touch of Court life which he would not otherwise have seen.

At Leipzig all was raging business, the *fair* being in hand; noisy and busy almost as Cheapside, London. Lots of dim haberdashery, leather without end, and all things

rolling about in noisy waggons with miniature wheels. To get any sleep at all was a kind of miracle. However, we did tolerably well, got even a book or two of the list I had formed, drank a glass of wine—one only in *Auerbachs Keller*—and at last got safe to Dresden, eighty miles off, which was a mighty deliverance, as from the tumult of Cheapside into the solitude of Bath, or the New Town of Edinburgh—a very interesting old capital where, if sleep had been attainable, I could have stayed a week with advantage. But, alas! it was *not*; so I had to plunge along and save, as from a conflagration, what little I could of my possibilities; and at length, with gratitude to Heaven, to get away into the steamer this afternoon and bid adieu to Dresden and its Japan and other palaces. . . . For Berlin, if it be not all the *noisier*, I design at least a week; in ten days hence I may be far on my way homeward again. . . . A tap-room with some twenty rustic gents (they did not go till after midnight, the scamps) enjoying cards, beer, and bad cigars for the last hour or two, seems to have winded itself up, and things are growing stone quiet in this establishment. I must now address myself to the task of falling asleep. We go to-morrow at nine. Lobositz (in Bohemia), Zittau (Lusatia), Frankfurt *am Oder*—Berlin—that is the projected route, but liable to revisal.

Mrs. Carlyle was still in Chelsea with her workmen all this time. It had been a trying summer to her. But she had the comfort of knowing that her husband was achieving the part of the business which had fallen to his share, better than might have been looked for. She writes to her brother-in-law, John:—

Mr. C. seems to be getting very successfully through his travels, thanks to the patience and helpfulness of Neuberg. He makes in every letter frightful *misereres* over his sleeping accommodations; but he cannot *conceal* that he is really pretty well, and gets sleep enough to go on with, more or less pleasantly. I wonder what he would have made of *my* sleeping accommodations during the last three months.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Bad Töplitz, September 27.

No opportunity of posting the above; so I tear it open again and add a few words. We have had a sore pilgrimage these last two days since I ended the other page; a small space to go over, but by confused Bohemian conveyances amid the half-savage Bohemian populations, with their fleas, their dirt, and above all their noises. However, we have partly managed the thing, and are got into beautiful quarters again; a romantic mountain watering-place, with the sun still bright upon it; and everybody of *Bath* kind gone away. Here or nowhere I ought to find some sleep, and then Berlin is full before us, and after Berlin, home, home! We have actually seen Lobositz, the first battle-field of Fritz in the Seven Years' War; and walked over it all this morning before breakfast, under the guidance of a Christian native, checked by my best memory of reading and maps, and found it do tolerably well. In fact, oh Goody dear, I have seen many curious and pleasant things, I ought to say—and *will* say at great length when we are by our own fireside together again. Neuberg *is* strong; one of the friendliest, handiest, most patient of men.

Berlin, October 1, 1852.
[British Hotel, Unter den Linden.]

Here you see we are at the *summit* of these wanderings, from which I hope there is for me a swift *perpendicular* return before long; not a slow parabolic one as the ascent has been. We came twenty-four hours ago, latish last night, from Frankfurt-on-the-Oder, from the field of Kunersdorf (a dreadful scraggy village where Fritz received his worst defeat), and various toils and *strapazen*; very weary, in a damp kind of night, and took shelter in the readiest inn, from which we have just removed to this better, at least far grander, one; where perhaps there are beds one can sleep in, and the butter is not bitter. Alas! such sorrows attend the wayfarer, and his first refuge is to sit down and write, if haply he have anyone to whom his writing will give a feeling of pity for

him. . . . Oh, I do wish these sleepless, joyless, sad and weary wanderings were at an end, as by Heaven's help they now soon shall be. And you too, poor little weary soul! You are quite worn out with that accursed 'thorough repair.' Would to Heaven we had never thought of it; but lived in the old black house we had, where at least was no noise of carpenters to drive one mad, no stink of paint to poison one. Driven out of the house again, and sleeping solitary in a little lodging! I declare it makes me quite sad to think of it; and ——, if —— is the fundamental cause of it, deserves to be, as you pray, 'particularly damned.' Confound him, and confound the whole confused business, this abominable, sorrowful, and shockingly expensive tour to Germany included. But no. Rather let us have patience. Nevertheless, I do grieve for thee. But let me narrate as usual, only with greater brevity.

From Lobositz to Töplitz the last letters brought you, letters written in the so-called Saxon Switzerland, amid the Bohemian mountains. . . . No English, scarcely any civilized traveller seems to have accomplished the thirty or forty English miles which lie between Lobositz and Zittau. We had a strange and strangest day of it in slow German *Stellwagens;* and in fact were horribly tired before the thing in general ended by a seat in the soft-going, swift, and certain railway-carriage, and the inn at *Herrnhut*, where we had to wait four hours of the stillest life you ever saw or dreamt of. *Herrnhut* (Lord's keeping) is the primitive and still central city of the Moravian brethren; a place not bigger than Annan, but beautiful, pure, and quiet beyond any town on the earth I dare say; and indeed more like a saintly dream of Ideal Calvinism made real than a town of stone and lime, where London porter, not needed by me, is to be had for money. I will tell you about *Herrnhut* too some day, for it is among the notable spots of the world, and I retain a lively memory of it. But not of it, nor of dreary moory Frankfurt and its Kunersdorf villages and polite lieutenants—for a Prussian lieutenant-adjutant knew *me* there by fame, and was very polite without knowing me—not of

this, nor of any other phenomenon will I now speak. In fact I am dead stupid; my heart nearly choked out of me, and my head churned to pieces. . . . Berlin is loud almost as London, but in no other way great or among the greatest. I should guess it about the size of Liverpool; and more like Glasgow in the straight openness of its streets. Many grand public edifices about this eastern end of the town; but on the whole it looks in many quarters almost shabby, in spite of its noise and paint; so *low* are the houses for a capital city; more like warehouses or maltkins, with the very chimneys wanting, for within is nothing but stoves. This '*Unter den Linden*' is the one good street of the place, as if another Princes Street at 300 yards' distance, and with tree rows between them, ran parallel to the Princes Street we know. It is on the north side of this we live, grand rooms indeed, and not dearer than an Edinburgh lodging, or nearly so dear as a London one—two guineas a week, one guinea each.

October 2, 4 P.M.

The night yielded me a handsome modicum of sleep, handsome for these parts, and the lodging promises every way to be good. Certainly the most like a human bed-room of any I have yet had in this country. After breakfast I went to the library, introduced myself, got catalogue of Frederick books. A dreary wilderness, mountains of chaff to one grain of corn; caught headache in the bad air within about an hour, and set off to the British Ambassador's, who can procure me liberty to take books *home*. Well received by the British Ambassador so soon as he had read Lady A.'s letter. His wife too came in and was very kind. All right. Have been in the Museum Picture Gallery since. Endless Christs and Marys, Venus's and Amors—at length an excellent portrait of Fritz.

October 8.

We leave Berlin to-morrow, Saturday the 9th. Go by Brunswick, by Hanover, Cologne, and from thence on Tuesday evening at Ostend I find a steamer direct for London. . . . I have had a terrible tumbling week in Berlin. Oh, what a

month in general I have had; month of the profoundest, ghastliest *solitude* in the middle of incessant talk and locomotion. But here after all I have got my things not so intolerably done, and have accomplished what was reasonably possible. Perhaps it will not look so ugly when once I am far away from it. In help from other people there has been redundancy rather than defect. One or two—especially a certain Herr Professor Magnus, the chief portrait painter here—have been quite marvellous with their civility; and on the whole it was usually rather a relief to me to get an hour, as now, to oneself, and be left to private exertions and reflections mainly. Yesterday I saw old Tieck, beautiful old man; so serene, so calm, so sad. I have also seen Cornelius, Rauch, &c., including Preuss, the historian of Frederick, all men in short for whom I had any use. Nay, they had me in their newspapers it would appear, and would gladly make a lion of me if I liked. A lion that can only get half sleep is not the lion that can shine in that trade, so we decline. The Ambassador has also been very good to me, got me into the library with liberty to take books home, invited me to dinner. But Magnus had engaged me before, and I could only make it *tea*. No matter for that, for they were all English commonplaces where I went. You will see me on Wednesday, but not till noon or *later*.

So was this terrible journey got done with, which to anyone but Carlyle would have been a mere pleasure trip; to him terrible in prospect, terrible in the execution, terrible in the retrospect. His wife said he could not conceal that he was pretty well, and had nothing really to complain of. Here is what he himself said about it when looking back with deliberate seriousness:—

After infinite struggles I had roused myself to go. The parting with my poor old mother, the crowning point of those unbearable days, was painful beyond endurance almost; and yet my heart in the inside of it seemed as if it were made of

stone, as if it would not weep any more except perhaps blood. One pays dear for any 'intellect' one may have. It means primarily 'sensibility,' which again means injury, pain, misery from unconscious nature, or conscious or unconscious man; in fact, a heavy burden painful to bear, however piously you take it.

After recapitulating the places which he had seen, and the persons whom he had met, he goes on:—

All this, which is etched into me painfully as with burning acids, I once thought of writing down in detail, but have not done, probably shall not do. It was a journey done as in some shirt of Nessus; misery and dyspeptic degradation, inflammation, and insomnia tracking every step of me. Not till all these vile fire showers, fallen into viler ashes now, have once been winnowed quite away, shall I see what 'additions to my spiritual picture gallery,' or other conquests from the business I have actually brought back with me. Neuberg, I ought to record here and everywhere, was the kindest, best-tempered, most assiduous of friends and helpers, 'worth ten couriers to me,' as I often defined him.

CHAPTER XXI.

A.D. 1852–3. ÆT. 57–58.

The Grange—Cheyne Row—The Cock torment—Reflections—An improved house—Funeral of the Duke of Wellington—Beginnings of 'Frederick'—The Grange again—An incident—Public opinion—Mother's illness—The demon fowls—Last letter to his mother—Her death—James Carlyle.

THE painters had not completed their work, and the smell was insupportable when Carlyle got home in the middle of October. He was in no condition to face any more annoyances, and he and his wife took refuge for three weeks at the Grange with the ever hospitable Ashburtons. There, too, the sulphurous mood was still predominant, and things did not go well with him. It was not till November that he was fairly re-established in his own quarters, and in a condition to so much as think of seriously beginning his work. A preliminary skirmish became necessary, to put to silence his neighbour's cocks. Mr. Remington, who then lived near him, and was the owner of the offenders, has kindly sent me the correspondence which passed on the occasion; very gracious and humble on Carlyle's part, requesting only that the cocks in question should be made inaudible from midnight till breakfast time; Mr. Remington, though they were favourites which he had brought from

Northumberland, instantly consenting to suppress them altogether. This accomplished, Carlyle proceeded as it were to clear the stage by recovering his own mental condition, and took himself severely to task for what he found amiss. Much that he says will seem exaggerated, but it will be remembered that he was not speaking to the world but to himself. It is idle to judge him by common rules. His nerves were abnormally sensitive. He lived habitually, unless he violently struggled against it, in what he had described as 'an element of black streaked with lightning.' Swift, when the evil humour was on him, made a voyage to the Houyhnhmns, and discharged his bile on his human brethren. Carlyle, who wished to purge the bile out of himself that he might use his powers to better purposes, began with a confession of his sins.

Journal.

November 9, 1852.—There has been a repair of the house here, which is not yet, after four months, quite complete. I write now in an unfurnished but greatly improved room, which is already, and still more will be, greatly superior to what it used to be . . . small thanks to it. My poor wife has worn herself to a shadow, fretting and struggling about it. I, sent on my travels since the middle of July, and only just finally home, am totally overset in soul, in body, and I may fear in breeches pocket too; and feel that I am drifting towards strange issues in these years and days. Never in my life nearer *sunk* in the mud oceans that rage from without and within. My survey of the last eight or nine years of my life yields little 'comfort' in the present state of my feelings. Silent weak rage, remorse even, which is not common with me; and, on the whole, a solitude of soul coupled with a helplessness, which are frightful to look upon, difficult to deal with in my present situation. For my *health* is

miserable too; diseased *liver* I privately perceive has much to do with the phenomenon; and I cannot yet learn to sleep again. During all my travels I have wanted from a third to half of my usual sleep. For the rest I guess it is a *change of epoch* with me, going on for good perhaps; I am growing to perceive that I have become an old man; that the flowery umbrages of summer—such as they were for me—and also the crops and fruits of autumn are nearly over for me, and stern winter only is to be looked for—a grim message—such, however, as is sent to every man. Oh ye Supreme Powers! thou great Soul of the world that *art* just, may I manage this but *well*, all sorrow then and smothered rage and despair itself shall have been cheap and welcome. No more of it to-day. I am not yet at the bottom of it; am not here writing wisely of it, even *sincerely* of it, though with an effort that way.

Dundee steamer to Linlathen about the middle of July; inexpressible gloom, silence. Sickly imprisonment of one's whole soul and life; such has often before been my lot, has also become my customary lot in this world. Cowardice? Sometimes. Generally, in late years, I think it is. Unusual weights have been thrown upon me. *Ach Gott!* whole mountains of horror and choking impediment. But certainly I have not been strong *enough* on my side; often, often not *bold* enough; but have fled and struck when I should have stood and defiantly fought. The votes of men, the respectabilities, the &c. &c., have been too sacred to me. It must be owned, too, the man has had such a set of conditions as were not always easy to govern, and could not by the old law-books be treated well. *Schicksal und eigen Schuld.* Aye, aye. Three weeks at Linlathen very memorable to me just now, but sordid, unproductive, to think of. Came away, by Kirkcaldy and Edinburgh, to Scotsbrig. There beside my poor old mother for near four weeks. . . . To Germany, after infinite struggles, I had roused myself to go. . . . Leith, Rotterdam steamer, the Rhine, Bonn for a week, Ems, Frankfurt, Homburg, Cassel, Eisenach, Wartburg (unforgettable), Weimar, Leipzig, Dresden, Lobositz, Zittau, Herrnhut, Kunersdorf, and Berlin, whence, after ten days, home.

My arrival here. Seas of paint still flooding everything, and my poor Jane so beaten in her hard battle—a wild hard battle many ways, and in which I cannot help thee, poor kind vehement soul for ever dear to me—this also is memorable, only too much. We went to the Grange till these uncleannesses were over here. At the Grange almost for four weeks. No right rest, no right *collapse* till Tuesday last, when in the wet damp evening of a pouring day I once more got home again for a continuance. Since then, here are we fairly *fronting* our destiny at least, which I own is sufficiently Medusa-like to these sick, solitary eyes. Courage! piety! patience! Heaven grant me *wisdom* to extract the *meanings* out of these sore lessons and to do the behests of the same. If that be granted me, oh how amply enough will that be!

To begin 'Frederick' then! It was easier to propose than to do. When a writer sets to work again after a long pause, his faculties have, as it were, to be caught in the field and brought in and harnessed. There was anxiety about his wife too, who was worn out by her summer discipline, and was 'never thinner for seven years.' She had gone home first from the Grange to get things ready.

Jane (he wrote to his mother) had the place clear of workers at last, clean as her wont is, and shining with gas at the door, and other lights to welcome me to tea. I have had a weary struggle every day since, and am not through it yet, arranging my things in their new places, an operation rather sad than hopeful to me in my present dull humour, but I must persist till it is done, and then by-and-by there will be real improvement. The house is clearly very much bettered; this room of mine in particular, and my bed-room upstairs, are, or will be, perfect beauties of rooms in their way. Let us be patient, 'canny as eggs,' and the better day will come at last. I am terribly *brashed* with all these tumblings about, and have not yet fairly recovered my feet, but with quiet, with pious endeavour, I shall surely do so; and *then*

it will be joyful to me to see the black tempest lying all behind me and the bright side of the cloud attained for me. All clouds have their bright sides too. That is also a thing which we should remember; and, on the whole, I hope to get to a little *work* again, and that is the consolation which surpasses all for me.

He would have got under way in some shape, but, before starting, any distraction is enough to check the first step, and there were distractions in plenty; among the rest the Duke of Wellington's funeral. The Duke had died in September. He was now to be laid in his tomb in the midst of a mourning nation; and Carlyle did not like the display. The body lay in state at Chelsea, 'all the empty fools of creation' running to look at it. One day two women were trampled to death in the throng at the hospital close by; and the whole thing, 'except for that dreadful accident,' was, in his eyes, 'a big bag of wind and nothingness.' 'It is indeed,' he said, 'a sad and solemn fact for England that such a man has been called away, the *last* perfectly honest and perfectly brave public man they had; and they ought, in reverence, to reflect on that, and sincerely testify *that*, if they could, while they commit him to his resting-place. But alas for the sincerity. It is even professedly all hypocrisy, noise, and expensive upholstery, from which a serious man turns away with sorrow and abhorrence.' In spite of 'abhorrence' he was tempted to witness the ceremony in the streets, which, however, only increased it.

Journal.

November 19, 1852.—Yesterday saw the Duke of Wellington's funeral procession from Bath House second-floor

windows; a painful, miserable kind of thing to me and others of a serious turn of mind. The one true man of official men in England, or that I know of in Europe, concludes his long course. The military music sounded, and the tramp of feet and the roll of guns and coaches, to him inaudible for evermore. The regiment he *first* served in was there, various regiments or battalions, one soldier from every regiment of the British line; above 4,000 soldiers in all. Nothing else in the sumptuous procession was of the least dignity. The car or hearse, a monstrous bronze mass, which broke through the pavement in various places, its weight being seven or ten tons, was of all the objects I ever saw the abominably ugliest, or nearly so. An incoherent huddle of expensive palls, flags, sheets, and gilt emblems and cross poles, more like one of the street carts that hawk door-mats than a bier for a hero. Disgust was general at this vile *ne plus ultra* of Cockneyism; but poor Wellington lay dead beneath it faring dumb to his long home. All people stood in deep silence and reverently took off their hats. In one of the Queen's carriages sat a man conspicuously reading the morning newspaper. Tennyson's verses are naught. Silence alone is respectable on such an occasion.

'Frederick' meanwhile was still unstarted. Where to begin? On what scale? In what tone? All was unsettled, and uncertainty, with Carlyle, was irritation and despondency.

As usual (he says, on the 5th of December) many things, or almost all things, are conspiring to hinder me from any clear work, or to choke up my power of working altogether. If I do not stand to myself and to my own cause it will be the worse for me. Heaven help me! Oh Heaven! But it is so always. The elements of our work lie scattered, disorganised, as if in a thick viscous chaotic ocean, ocean illimitable in all its three dimensions; and we must swim and sprawl towards them, must snatch them, and victoriously piece them together as we can. *Eheu!* Shall I try Frederick, or not try him?

The winter passed on. In January he tells his mother:—

Our quiet way of life continues, and our wet weather, and other puddles, outward and inward, have not ceased either. We should be thankful for the health we have, both of us. If we use our *besom* machinery and sweep honestly and well, the puddles do not gain quite the upper hand after all. Jane is out just now, gone out to enjoy the dry day among so many wet. She complains of defective sleep, &c., but still goes hardily about, and indeed I think is stronger than in past years. She reads now with *specs* in the candle-light, as well as I; uses her mother's specs I perceive, and indeed looks very well in them, going handsomely into the condition of an elderly dame. I remember always your joy over *specs*. Old age is not in itself matter for sorrow. It is matter for thanks if we have left our work done behind us. God deal with us in mercy, not in rigour, on that head; as we trust it will be for the faithful of us. But, in fact, it is not a serious person's sorrow surely that he is getting out of the battle; that he sees the still regions beyond it, where there is no battle more.

He began at last to write something—but it was wrongly pitched. It would not do, and he threw it aside. In March he was off to the Grange again—off there always when the Ashburtons invited him—but always, or almost so, to no purpose. 'Worse than useless to me,' he said when the visit was over. 'A long nightmare; *folly* and *indigestion* the order of the day. Why go thither? Really it neither does, nor can do me any good to frequent that much coveted kind of society—or, alas! any kind. I believe there is no lonelier mortal on the face of the earth at present, nor perhaps often was. Don't be a *Kopfhänger*, however. Use Solitude, since it is thy lot; that also is a lot, and rather an original one in these days.' The

party at the Grange was in itself brilliant enough. Venables was there, whom he liked better than most men; and Azeglio and other notabilities. But even Venables, on this occasion, he found 'dogmatic,' and to Azeglio he was rude. Azeglio had been talking contemptuously of Mazzini. '*Monsieur*,' said Carlyle to him, '*vous ne le connaissez pas du tout, du tout!*' and turned away and sat down to a newspaper. 'Not a word of sense was talked to him, except by accident.' One thing, however, did occur which impressed him considerably, and of which I often heard him speak.

To Margaret Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

The Grange, April 1, 1853.

Last night, while we sate quietly at dinner, a slip of paper was handed in by one of the servants to Lord Ashburton. 'A fire visible somewhere in the neighbourhood.' I admired much the silent promptitude with which Lord A., telling nobody, went out, leaving his dinner in the middle, drew on boots and cloak as we found afterwards, and galloped off with a groom in the wild, squally night, which soon became plunges of rain. This is what an English country gentleman is always good for, this and the like of this, if he is of the right quality. The fire proved to be six miles off—one of the farmers of this estate, his '*omstead* all in a blaze, cattle, &c., saved. Lord A. came back about eleven, wet enough, but one would have said almost glad; though to him also it will be a considerable loss, no doubt.

A week at the Grange was as much as he could bear, and it did not seem to have done very much for him.

Journal.

April 13, 1853.—Still struggling and haggling about Frederick. Ditto ditto, alas! about many things! No words

can express the forlorn, heart-broken, silent, utterly *enchanted* kind of humour I am kept in; the worthless, empty, and painfully contemptible way in which, with no company but my own, with my *eyes* open, but as with my hands bound, I pass these days and months, and even years. Good Heavens! Shall I never more rally in this world then, but lie buried under mud and imbecility till the *end* itself (which cannot be distant, and is coming on as with seven-leagued boots) overtake me? Several are to blame; for though no one hates me, I think nearly *everybody* of late takes me on the wrong side, and proves unconsciously unjust to me, more or less destructive to me. Several are to blame, or to pity. But above all there is one. Thou thyself. Awake—arise! Oh heaven and earth, shall I never again get awake, and feel myself working and alive? In the earth there is no other pleasure for me, no other possession for me but that same; and I neglect it, indolently lie praying for it, do not rise and victoriously snatch it, while the fast fleeting days yet are. Here are now ten years, and what account can I give of them? The work done in them is very small even, in comparison. Remorse is worthless. The remnant of the future, this yet remains to us. . . . Endless German history books; dull, bad, mostly wearisome; most uninstructive, every one of them; Frederick, an unfortunate subject. In the heart of huge *solar* systems—anti-solar rather, of chaff and whirling confusions, I sometimes think I notice lineaments of a Fritz, concerning whom I *shall* have a word to say—say it? Oh Heaven, that I could say it!

The review newspaper and world, all dead against me at present, which is instructive too if I take the right point of survey for it, and look into it without jaundice of any kind. The *canaille* of talkers in type are not my friends then. They know not well what to say about me if not 'Thou, scoundrel, art of other mind than *we*, it would appear;' which the wiser are afraid might be questionable; and the unwiser, with one voice pretty much, have already done. Well, out of that too I had got new views. I myself was in fault, and the depths and immensities of human stupidity were

not practically known to me before. A strange insight, real, but hardly fit for uttering even here, lies in that. 'Who can change the opinion of these people?' That is their view of the world, irrefragable, unalterable to them. Take note of that, remember that. 'The Gadarene Swine!' Often, in my rage, has that incident occurred to me. Shrill snort of astonishment, of alert attention. 'Hrumph!' 'That is it, then!' 'So sits the wind!' And with tails up and one accord at full speed away they go, down steep places to their watery grave, the *Devil* being in them. Withal it is rather curious to remark also, as I do on various occasions, how, while all the talk and print goes against me, my real estimation in the world—alas, certainly without new merit of mine, for I never was so idle and worthless—seems steadily increasing—steadily in various quarters, and surely fast enough, if not too fast. Be true to thyself. Oh Heaven! Be not a sluggard. And so give up this and take to something like work.

To try to work Carlyle was determined enough. He went nowhere in the summer, but remained at Chelsea chained to 'Frederick,' and, moving ahead at last, leaving his wife to take a holiday. His brother John, who was now married, had taken a house at Moffat, and Mrs. Carlyle, needing change, went off to stay with him there. Paint was wanted in Cheyne Row again, and Carlyle was exquisitely sensitive to the smell of it. Other cocks—not, it is to be hoped, Mr. Remington's—set up their pipes in the summer mornings. 'Vile yellow Italians' came grinding under his windows. He had a terrible time of it; but he set his teeth and determined to bear his fate. One haunting thought only refused to leave him. Good might still lie ahead if his wife and he could keep the devil out of them. If! but what an 'if'!

O Jeannie (he wrote), you know nothing about me just now. With all the clearness of vision you have, your lynx-

eyes do not reach into the inner region of me, and know not what is in my heart, what, on the whole, was always, and will always be there. I wish you did; I wish you did.

Sitting all alone in his Chelsea garden he meditated on his miseries, in one letter eloquently dilating on them, in the next apologising for his weakness.

But what could I do (he said)? fly for shelter to my mammy, like a poor infant with its finger cut? complain in my distress to the one heart that used to be open to me?

'Greater than man, less than woman,' as Essex said of Queen Elizabeth. The cocks were locked up next door, and the fireworks at Cremorne were silent, and the rain fell and cooled the July air; and Carlyle slept, and the universe became once more tolerable.

With friends outside his family he was equally disconsolate.

To Thomas Erskine, Linlathen.

Chelsea: July 9, 1853.

I had a very miserable tour in Germany; not one night of sleep all the time, and nothing, or too little, of the living kind that was beautiful to look upon in return for all that physical distress at once so tormenting and so degrading. I remember the Rhine river as a noble acquisition to my internal picture gallery. Cologne, &c., I got no good of, but rather mischief; the sight of those impious charletans doing their so-called 'worship' there (a true devil worship, if ever there was one); and the fatal brood, architectural and others—*Puseyites* and enchanted human apes that inhabit such places—far transcended any little pleasure I could have got from the supreme of earthly masonry,[1] and

[1] Bunsen had once tried to enlist Carlyle's sympathies in the completion of Cologne cathedral, showing him the plans, &c. Carlyle said

converted my feeling into a sad and angry one. I was in the Wartburg, however—in Martin Luther's room—and I believe I almost wept there, feeling it to be, as far as I could understand, the most sacred spot in all the earth at this moment. Here, tempted by the devil (always by 'devils' enough), but not subdued or subduable, stood God's Truth, embodied in the usual way: one man against all men. It was upon these hills he looked out; it was there and in that way *he* dealt with the devil and defied him to his face. A scene worth visiting indeed. There are excellent portraits by Cranach of Luther and his father and mother hung on the walls. Martin himself has a fine German face: eyes so frank and serious, a look as if he could take a cup of ale as well as wrestle down the devil in a handsome manner.

The Wartburg is much visited by tourists; but I was not sorry to find they did not much heed Luther—merely took him among the rest and dwelt chiefly on the 'Byzantine architecture' and restorations. The only other beautiful thing I saw was Tieck, and he is since dead. On Fritz I can make no impression whatever, and practically consider I have given him up and am not equal to such a task on such terms.

My wife is now at Moffat with my brother and his household. As to me, I got so smashed to pieces and perceptibly hurt in every way by my journeying last autumn—all travel and noise is at all times so noxious to me—I have never yet been able to brook the notion of travelling since, but have flattered myself I should sit still here, and would on almost any terms. Certain it is, I have need enough to stay here, if staying by myself in my own sad company be the way to *riddle* any of the infinite dross out of me and get a little nearer what grains of metal there may be.

nothing till obliged to speak. Then at last, being forced, he said: 'It is a very fine pagoda if ye could get any sort of a God to put in it!' Bunsen's eyes flashed anger for a moment, but the 'ridiculous' was too strong for him, and he burst out laughing. I have heard the story told as if there had been a breakfast party with bishops, &c., present. Carlyle, however, when I asked him, said that he and Bunsen were *alone*.

Adieu! dear Mr. Erskine. Give my kind and grateful remembrances to your two ladies and to everybody at Linlathen.

I am always faithfully yours,

T. CARLYLE.

A real calamity, sad but inevitable and long foreseen, was now approaching. Signs began to show that his old mother at Scotsbrig was drawing near the end of her pilgrimage. She was reported to be ill, and even dangerously ill. Mrs. Carlyle hurried over from Moffat to assist in nursing her, meeting, when she arrived there, the never-forgotten but humbly offered birthday present of July 14 from her poor husband. Her mother-in-law, while she was there, sank into the long, death-like trance which she so vividly describes.[1] Contrary to all expectations, the strong resolute woman rallied from it, and Carlyle, always hopeful, persuaded himself that for the time the stroke had passed over.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle, Scotsbrig.

Chelsea: July 23, 1853.

Thank you very much, my dear, for your judicious and kind attention in writing and in not writing. You may judge with what feelings I read your letter last night, and again and again read it; how anxiously I expect what you will say to-night. If I had indeed known what was going on during Monday, what would have become of me that day? I *see* everything by your description as if I looked at it with my own eyes. My poor, beloved, good old mother. Things crowd round me in my solitude, old reminiscences from the very beginnings of my life. It is very beautiful if it is so sad; and I have nothing to say. I, like all mortals, have to feel the inexorable that there is in life, and to say, as piously as I can, 'God's will, God's will!' Upon the whole, I am

[1] *Letters and Memorials*, vol. ii. p. 221.

glad you went there at this time. If you could only begin to sleep I should be thankful to have you there in my own absence. Write to me; do not fail to write while you continue. Was not that a beautiful old mother's message: 'None, I am afraid, that he would like to hear'?[1] *Sunt lacrymæ rerum.* You need not be apprehensive of —— where you are. She really likes you, and has good insight, though capable of strong prepossessions. John, even if you are in his way, which I do not think at all, has nothing to do with it. *The rest are loyal to you to the bone.* Surely, as you say, it was quite wrong to give such quantities of wine, &c., to an old, weak person. I hope and trust John has entirely abandoned that system. It is purchasing of momentary relief at a price which must be ruinous.

I have done my task to-day again, but I had drugs in me, and am not in a very vigorous humour. My task is a most dreary one. I am too old for blazing up round this Fritz and his affairs; and I see it will be a dreadful job to *riddle* his history into purity and consistency out of the endless rubbish of so many dullards as have treated of it. But I will try, too. I cannot yet afford to be *beaten*; and truly there is no other thing attainable to me in life except even my own poor scantling of work such as it may be. If I can *work* no more, what is the good of *me* further? We shall all have a right deep sleep by-and-by, my own little Jeannie. Thou wilt lie quiet beside me there in the *divine* bosom of eternity, if never in the diabolic whirl of time any more. But this is too sad a saying, though to me it is blessed and indubitable as well as sad.

I called on Lady A——; less mocking than usual; is to have a last Addiscombe party on Saturday week, and then go for the North.

Adieu! Jeannie mine. God bless for ever my poor mother and thee!

T. C.

[1] 'I asked her if she had any message for you, and she said, "None, I'm afraid, that he would like to hear, for he'll be sorry that I'm so frail."' —*Letters and Memorials*, vol. ii. p. 225.

The alarm at Scotsbrig having passed off, minor evils became again important. The great cock question revived in formidable proportions. Mrs. Carlyle had gone to her cousin's at Liverpool, but her presence was needed urgently in Cheyne Row to deal with it. A room was to be constructed at the top of the house, where neither cockcrows nor other sound could penetrate; but until it was completed 'the unprotected male,' as Carlyle called himself, was suffering dismally.

I foresee in general (he wrote to her on July 27) these cocks will require to be abolished, entirely silenced, whether we build the new room or not. I would cheerfully shoot them, and pay the price if discovered, but I have no gun, should be unsafe for hitting, and indeed seldom see the wretched animals. Failing everything, I see dimly the *ultima ratio*, and indeed wish I had in my drawer what of mineral or vegetable extract would do the fatal deed. Truly I think often it will need to be *done*. A man is not a Chatham nor a Wallenstein; but a man has work too which the Powers would not quite wish to have suppressed by two-and-sixpence worth of bantams. O! my dear! my dear! I am a most unvictorious man surely.

Morning after morning the horrid clarions blew.

The cocks must either withdraw or die (he cried, two days later). That is a fixed point; and I must do it myself if no one will help. It is really too bad that a 'celebrated man,' or any man, or even a well-conditioned animal of any size, should be submitted to such scandalous paltrinesses; and it must end, and I had better make that my first business to-day. But I will do nothing till you come. Then indeed I feel as if mercy were already wrought for me.

For some cause there was a respite for a night or two, but now the owner of the cocks, one Ronca, was

heard coughing at half-past eight in the morning, and this—but this could hardly be made a crime. 'Poor devil!' he said to himself, with a tinge of remorse, 'a bad cough indeed; and I am to be annoyed at the mere noise of it. Selfish mortal!' Lady Ashburton, hearing of his forlorn condition, made over the now vacant Addiscombe to him. His wife came back. The cocks were for a time disposed of, and the new room was set about. The new room was the final hope. Till it was finished there could be no surety of peace. '*Ach Gott!*' he said, 'I am wretched, and in silence *nearly* mad.'

Journal.

August 17, 1853.—Near the *nadir*, I should think, in my affairs. The wheel must turn. Let me not quite despair. All summer, which I resolved to spend *here*, at least without the distraction of travel for a new hindrance, I have been visibly below par in health; annoyed with innumerable paltry things; and, to crown all—a true mock-crown—with the crowings, shriekings, and half-maddening noises of a stock of fowls which my poor neighbour has set up for his profit and amusement. To great evils one must oppose great virtues; and also to *small*, which is the harder task of the two. Masons, who have already killed half a year of my life in a too sad manner, are again upon the roof of the house, after a dreadful bout of resolution on my part, building me a *soundless room*. The world, which can do me no good, shall at least not torment me with its street and backyard noises. It is all the small request I make of the world, says wounded vanity, wounded &c.; in fact, a wounded and humiliated mind. No more unvictorious man is now living. I can do no work though I still keep trying. Try better! Alas! alas! my dear old mother seems to be fading fast away from me. My thoughts are dark and sad continually with that idea. *Inexorabile fatum!* The great,

the eternal is there, and also the paltriest and smallest, to load me down. I seem to be sinking inextricably into chaos. But I won't! These are the two extremes of my lot of burdens; and there lie enough more, and sore enough between, of which I write nothing here. I am getting taught contempt of the world and *its* beneficences. Nay, perhaps I am really learning. Let me learn with *piety*. Perhaps I shall one day bless these miseries too. Steady! steady! Don't give it up! . . . Panizzi, whom I do not love, and who returns the feeling, *will* not, though solicited from various quarters—high quarters some of them—admit me to the silent rooms of the King's Library, to a place where I *could* read and enquire. Never mind! No matter at all! Perhaps it is even better so. I believe I could explode the poor monster if I took to petitioning, writing in the 'Times,' &c. But I shall take good heed of that. Intrinsically he hinders me but little. Intrinsically the blame is not in him, but in the prurient darkness and confused pedantry and ostentatious inanity of the world which put him there, and which I must own he very fairly represents and symbolizes there. Lords Lansdowne and Brougham put Panizzi in; and the world with its Hansards and ballot-boxes and sublime apparatus put in Lords Lansdowne and Brougham. A saddish time, Mr. Rigmarole. Yes! but what then?

Of the two extreme trials of which Carlyle spoke, the greatest, the one which really and truly was to shake his whole nature, was approaching its culmination. Although his mother had rallied remarkably from her attack in the summer, and was able to read and converse as usual, there had been no essential recovery; there was to be and there could be none. His mother, whom he had regarded with an affection 'passing the love of sons,' with whom, in spite of, or perhaps in consequence of, her profound Christian piety, he had found more in common, as he often

said, than with any other mortal—was now evidently about to be taken away from him. A feeling peculiarly tender had united these two. . . . Carlyle, as his letters show, had been haunted from his earliest days by the terror that he must one day lose her. She had watched over the workings of his mind with passionate solicitude: proud of his genius, and alternately alarmed for his soul. In the long evenings when they had sate together over the fire with their pipes at Mainhill, he had half-satisfied her that he and she were one in heart and in essentials. His first earnings, when a school usher, were spent in contributing to her comforts. When money came from Boston for the 'French Revolution,' the 'kitlin' instantly sent 'the auld cat' an 'American mouse.' If she gloried in his fame and greatness, he gloried more in being the son of the humble Margaret Carlyle—and while she lived, she, and only she, stood between him and the loneliness of which he so often and so passionately complained. No one else, perhaps, ever completely understood his character; and of all his letters none are more tenderly beautiful than those which he sent to Scotsbrig. One more of these has yet to be given—the last—which it is uncertain whether she was able to read. He wrote it on his own birthday, when he was on the point of going again to the Grange, and it is endorsed by him in his own latest shaking hand, 'My last letter to my mother.'

Chelsea: December 4, 1853.

My dear, good Mother,—I wrote to Jean the other day and have very little news to tell you; but I cannot let this day pass without sending you some word or other, were it never so insignificant. We are going into the country

to-morrow, to the Grange, for two weeks or perhaps a little more, partly to let the painters get done with that weary 'room' of which you have heard so much; partly because the Ashburtons, whose house we visited lately without their own presence, would have it so, and Jane thought we were bound. She will go therefore: and I, having once landed her there, am to have liberty to leave again when I will. Meanwhile I have bargained to be private all day in their big house, to go on with my work just as if at home, &c. We will see how it answers. I confess I get no good of any company at present; nor, except in stubbornly trying to work —alas! too often in vain—is there any sure relief to me from thoughts which are very sad. But we must not 'lose heart;' lose faith—never, never! Dear old mother, weak and sick and dear to me, while I live in God's creation, what a day has this been in my solitary thought; for, except a few words to Jane, I have not spoken to anyone, nor, indeed, hardly seen anyone, it being dusk and dark before I went out—a dim silent Sabbath day, the sky foggy, dark with damp, and a universal stillness the consequence, and it is this day gone fifty-eight years that I was born. And my poor mother! Well! we are all in God's hands. Surely God is good. Surely we ought to trust in Him, or what trust is there for the sons of men? Oh, my dear mother! Let it ever be a comfort to you, however weak you are, that you did your part honourably and well while in strength, and were a noble mother to me and to us all. I am now myself grown old, and have had various things to do and suffer for so many years; but there is nothing I ever had to be so much thankful for as for the mother I had. That is a truth which I know well, and perhaps this day again it may be some comfort to you. Yes, surely, for if there has been any good in the things I have uttered in the world's hearing, it was *your* voice essentially that was speaking through me; essentially what you and my brave father meant and taught me to mean, this was the purport of all I spoke and wrote. And if in the few years that may remain to me, I am to get any more written for the world, the essence of it so far as it

is worthy and good, will still be yours. May God reward you, dearest mother, for all you have done for me! I never can. Ah no! but will think of it with gratitude and pious love so long as I have the power of thinking. And I will pray God's blessing on you, now and always, and will write no more on that at present, for it is better for me to be silent.

Perhaps a note from the doctor will arrive to-morrow; I am much obliged, as he knows, for his punctuality on that subject. He knows there is none so interesting to me, or can be. Alas! I know well he writes me the best view he can take; but I see too, how utterly frail my poor mother is, and how little he or any mortal can help. Nevertheless, it is a constant solace to me to think he is near you, and our good Jean. Certainly she does *me* a great service in assiduously watching over you; and it is a great blessing to us all that she is there to do such a duty. As to my own health, I am almost surprised to report it is so good. In spite of all these tumblings and agitations, I really feel almost better than I have done in late years; certainly not worse; and at this time within sight of sixty it is strange how little decay I feel; nothing but my eyesight gone a very little; and my hope, but also my fear or care at all, about this world, gone a great deal. Poor Jane is not at all strong, sleeps very ill, &c. Perhaps the fortnight of fresh air and change of scene will do her some good. But she is very tough, and a bit of good stuff too. I often wonder how she holds out, and braves many things with so thin a skin. She is sitting here reading. She sends her affection to you and to them all. She speaks to me about you almost daily, and answers many a question and speculation ever since she was at Scotsbrig. Give my love to Jamie, to Isabella, and them all. May God's blessing be on you all!

T. CARLYLE.

It could not have been with any pleasure that, at a moment when his mother was so manifestly sinking, Carlyle felt himself called on to go again to the Grange. He had been at home only a month since

he last left. But there was to be a grand gathering of great London people there. The Ashburtons were pressing, and he was under too many obligations to refuse. They went, both of them, into the midst of London intellect and social magnificence. Mrs. Carlyle was able to stay a few days only, for the cock problem had reached a crisis. In his despair, Carlyle had thought of actually buying the lease of the house where the dreadful creatures were nourished, turning the people out and leaving it empty. The 'demon fowls' were a standing joke at the witty Grange. Either he or his wife was required upon the spot to make an arrangement. He says that she proposed to go; she indicates that the pressure was on his side, and that she thought it a 'wildgoose enterprise.'[1] At any rate, the visit which was to have improved her health was cut short on this account, and she was packed off to Chelsea. He continued on in the shining circle till, on December 20, news came from Scotsbrig that his mother was distinctly worse and could not long survive. It was not quite clear that the danger was immediate. He tried to hope, but to no purpose. He felt that he ought to go down to her, at any rate that he ought not to continue where he was. His hostess consented to his going; he writes as if he had been obliged to apply for permission. Lady Ashburton, he says in one place, gave him leave.[2] In a letter written at the time, he says, 'Lady A. admitted at once, when I told her the case, that I ought to go thither, without doubt; at all events to get out of *this* has become a necessity for me; this is not

[1] *Letters and Memorials*, vol. ii. p. 239. [2] Ibid. p. 242.

supportable in my present condition.' He hurried to Scotsbrig, stopping only a night in London, and was in time to see his mother once more alive. He has left several accounts of the end of this admirable woman. That in his Journal is the most concise.

Journal.

January 8, 1854.—The stroke has fallen. My dear old mother is gone from me, and in the winter of the year, confusedly under darkness of weather and of mind, the stern final epoch—*epoch of old age*—is beginning to unfold itself for me. I had gone to the Grange with Jane, not very willingly; was sadly in worthless solitude for most part passing my Christmas season there. The news from Scotsbrig had long been bad; extreme weakness, for there was no disease, threatening continually for many months past to reach its term. What to do I knew not. At length shaking aside my sick languor and wretched uncertainty I perceived plainly that I ought *not* to be there—but I ought to go to Scotsbrig at all risks straightway. This was on Tuesday, December 20; on Wednesday I came home; on Thursday evening set off northward by the express train. The night's travel, Carlisle for the three quarters of an hour I waited, Kirtlebridge at last, and my anxieties in the walk to Scotsbrig; these things I shall not forget. It is matter of perennial thankfulness to me, and beyond my desert in that matter very far, that I found my dear old mother still alive; able to recognise me with a faint joy, her former *self* still strangely visible there in all its lineaments, though worn to the uttermost thread. The brave old mother and the good, whom to lose had been my fear ever since intelligence awoke in me in this world, arrived now at the final bourn. Never shall I forget her wearied eyes that morning, looking out gently into the wintry daylight; every instant falling together in sleep and then opening again. She had in general the most perfect clearness of intellect, courageous composure, affectionate patience, complete presence of mind. Dark clouds

of physical suffering, &c., did from time to time eclipse and confuse; but the clear steady light, gone now to the size of a *star*, as once it had been a *sun*, came always out victorious again. At night on that Friday she had forgotten me—'Knew me only since the morning.' I went into the other room; in a few minutes she sent for me to say she did now remember it all, and knew her son Tom as of old. 'Tell us how thou sleeps' she said, when I took leave about midnight. 'Sleeps!' Alas she herself had lain in a sleep of death for sixteen hours, till that very morning at six, when I was on the road! That was the *third* of such *sleeps* or half-faints lasting for fifteen or sixteen hours. Jane saw the first of them in August. On Saturday if I recollect, her sense in general seemed clear, though her look of weakness was greater then ever. Brother Jamie and I had gone out to walk in the afternoon. Returning about dusk we found her suffering greatly; want of breath, owing to weakness. What passed from that time till midnight will never efface itself, and need not be written here. I never saw a mind more clear and *present*, though worn down now to the uttermost and sinking in the dark floods. My good veracious affectionate and brave old mother! I keep one or two incidents and all the perplexed image of that night to myself, as something very precious, singular, and sternly sacred to me; beautiful too in its valiant simple worth, and touching as what else could be to me? About eleven my brother John ventured on half a dose of laudanum, the pain of breathing growing ever worse otherwise. Relief perceptible in consequence—we sent my sister Jean to bed—who had watched for nights and months, relieved only by John at intervals. I came into the room where John was now watching. 'Here is Tom come to bid you good night, mother,' said he. She smiled assent, took leave of me as usual. As I turned to go she said, 'I'm muckle obleeged t' ye.' Those were her last voluntary words in this world. After that she spoke no more—slept ever deeper. Her sleep lasted about sixteen hours. She lay on her back, stirred no muscle. The face was as that of a statue with slight changes of expression.

'Infinite astonishment' was what one might have fancied to read on it at one time; the breathing not very hard or quick, yet evidently difficult, and not changing sensibly in character, till four p.m., when it suddenly fell lower, paused, again paused, perhaps still again: and our good and dear old mother was gone from her sorrows and from us. I did not weep much, or at all: except for moments: but the sight too, and the look backwards and forwards, was one that a far harder heart might have melted under. Farewell, farewell! She was about 84 years of age, and could not with advantage to any side remain with us longer. Surely it was a good Power that gave us such a mother; and good though stern that took her away from amid such grief and labour by a death beautiful to one's thoughts. 'All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.' This they often heard her muttering, and many other less frequent pious texts and passages. Amen, Amen! Sunday, December 25, 1853—a day henceforth, for ever memorable to me.

The funeral was on Thursday. Intense frost had come on the Monday night. I lingered about Scotsbrig, wandering silently in the bright hard silent mornings and afternoons, waiting till all small temporal matters were settled; which they decently were. On Monday morning I went—cold as Siberia, yet a bright sun shining; had a painful journey, rapid as a comet, but with neither food nor warmth attainable till after midnight, when my sad pilgrimage ended.

Since then I have been languidly sorting rubbish, very languid, sad, and useless every way. It cannot be said that I have yet *learned* this severe lesson I have got. I must try to learn it more and more, or it will not pass from me.

To live for the shorter or longer remainder of my days with the simple bravery, veracity, and piety of her that is gone: that would be a right learning from her death, and a right honouring of her memory. But alas all is yet *frozen* within me; even as it is without me at present, and I have made little or no way. God be helpful to me! I myself am very weak, confused, fatigued, entangled in poor *worldlinesses* too. Newspaper paragraphs, even as this sacred and peculiar

thing, are not indifferent to me. Weak soul! and I am fifty-eight years old, and the tasks I have on hand, Frederick &c., are most ungainly, incongruous with my mood—and the night cometh, for me too is not distant, which for her is come. I must try, I must try. Poor brother Jack! Will he do his Dante now?[1] For him also I am sad; and surely he has deserved gratitude in these last years from us all.

James Carlyle, who was the master at Scotsbrig, was the youngest of the brothers. Carlyle told me that he thought his brother James had been the happiest of them all—happy chiefly in this, that he had fallen less under his own influence than Alexander and John. He was a mere child in the years when 'Tom was home from College'; he had been educated by his father and mother, and had believed what they believed. There is a touching mention of James in a letter written during this sad time from Scotsbrig.

'Jamie is kind,' Carlyle tells his wife, 'and honest as a soul can be; comes and sits with me, or walks with me when I like, *goes* gently away when he sees I had rather be alone.'

He shuddered as he thought of his hesitation in setting out.

'Oh,' he said, 'I am bound to be for ever thankful that I got here in time; not by own wisdom either or by any worth in my own management of the affair. Had I stayed at the Grange and received the news *there*, it would have driven me half-distracted and left a remorse to me till the very end of my existence.'

The few days of reflection before the funeral were spent in silence. He wrote on one of them to Erskine.

'I got here in time to be recognised, to be cheered with the sacred beauty of a devout and valiant soul's departure.

[1] Translation of Dante, part of which had been admirably done by John Carlyle. He was doubting whether to go on with it or leave it.

God make me thankful for such a mother. God enable me to live more worthily of her in the years I may still have left. I must rally myself if I can for a new and sterner final epoch which I feel has now arrived for me. The last two years have been without action, worthless to me except for the final burning away of things that needed to be burnt.'

In London, when settled there again, he lived for many weeks in strictest seclusion, working at his task or trying to work, but his mind dwelling too constantly on his irreparable loss to allow him to make progress.

My labour (he wrote to his brother John on January 14th, 1854) is miserably languid : the heart within me is low and sad. I have kept quite alone, seen nobody at all. I think of our dear mother with a kind of mournful blessedness. Her life was true, simple, generous, brave; her end, with the last traces of these qualities still visible in it, was very beautiful if very sad to us. I would not for much want those two stern days at Scotsbrig from my memory. They lie consecrated there as if baptised in sorrow and with the greatness of eternity in them.

A fortnight later it was still the same.

My soul is exceeding sorrowful, all hung with *black* in general, thinking of what is gone and what cannot return to me. I hold my peace in general and accept the decrees of heaven, still hoping that some useful labour may be again possible for me here, which is the one consolation I can conceive at present.

Towards the spring, evening visitors were readmitted into Cheyne Row ; but they were not very welcome, and were not, perhaps, very graciously received.

We have a turn or two of talk (he reports on February 10th), which does *me* little good, yet is perhaps better than

flat silence, perhaps *not*. The other night, H., by volunteer appointment, came to us; brought one, R., more than half-drunk, in his train, and one D., an innocent ingenuous babe, in red hair and beard, member for the —— borough. R. also and more conspicuously, member for something, is a Jew of the deepest type, black hook-nosed Jew, with the mouth of a shark; coarse, savage, infidel, hungry, and with considerable strength of heart, head, and jaw. He went early away. The rest, to whom Ape L., and an unknown natural philosopher sometimes seen here with him, had accidentally joined themselves, stayed long. *Nichts zu bedeuten.*

It was entertaining to watch the struggle in Carlyle on such occasions between courtesy and veracity. He was seldom actually rude, unless to a great man like the Sardinian Minister. But he was not skilful in concealing his dislikes and his boredoms. His journal shows a gradual but slow, very slow recovery out of his long prostration.

Journal.

February 28, 1854.—Not quite idle; always indeed professing to work; but making, as it were, no way at all. Alas! alas! In truth I am weak and forlorn to a degree; have the profoundest feeling of utter loneliness in the world; which the company, 'when it comes,' of my fellow-creatures rather tends to aggravate and strengthen than assuage. I have, however, or am getting, a kind of sad peace withal, 'renunciation,' more real superiority to vain wishes, worldly honours, advantages, &c., the peace that belongs to the *old*. My Frederick looks as if it never would take shape in me; in fact the problem is to burn away the immense dungheap of the 18th century with its ghastly cants, foul, blind sensualities, cruelties and *inanity* now fallen *putrid*, rotting inevitably towards annihilation; to destroy and extinguish all that, having got to know it, and to know that it must be rejected for evermore; after which the perennial portion, pretty much Fried-

rich and Voltaire, so far as I can see, may remain conspicuous and capable of being delineated (very loosely expressed all this; does not fit my thought like a skin; but, like an Irish waistcoat, it does in some degree).

Sunday morning last, there came into my mind a vision of the old Sunday mornings I had seen at Mainhill, &c. Poor old mother, father, and the rest of us bustling about to get dressed in time and down to the meeting-house at Ecclefechan. Inexpressibly sad to me, and full of meaning. They are gone now, vanished all; their poor bits of thrifty clothes, more precious to me than Queen's or King's expensive trappings, their pious struggling effort, their 'little life,' it is all away. It has all melted into the still sea; it was 'rounded with a sleep.' So with all things. Nature and this big universe in all corners of it show nothing else. Time! Death! All-devouring Time! This thought, '*Exeunt omnes*,' and how the generations are like crops of grass, *temporary*, very, and all *vanishes*, as it were an apparition and a ghost; these things, though half a century old in me, possess my mind as they never did before. On the whole I have a strange interior *tomb* life, and dwell in secret among scenes and contemplations which I do not speak of to anybody. My mother! my good heavy-laden dear and brave and now lost mother! The thought that I shall never see her more with these eyes gives a strange painful flash into me many times when I look at that poor portrait I have of her. 'Like Ulysses,' as I say, I converse with the shade of my mother and sink out of all company and light common talk into that grand element of sorrow and eternal stillness. God is great. I will not ask or guess (*know* no man ever could or can) what He has appointed for His poor creatures of the earth; a right and good and wise appointment, it full surely is. Let me look to it with pious manfulness, without either hope or fear that were excessive. Excessive? Alas! how very *small* it is in me; really inconsiderable, beaten out of me by 'many stripes,' pretty continual for these fifty years, till I feel as if fairly broken and pounded in the mortar; and have oftenest no prayer except Rest, rest; let me sleep then if

that must be my doom! For as God lives I am weary, very weary, and the way of this world does not suit me at all. Such changes grow upon the spirit of a man. When I look back thirty years and read my feelings, it is very strange. Oh pious mother! kind, good, brave, and truthful soul as I have ever found, and more than I have ever elsewhere found in this world, your poor Tom, long out of his schooldays now, has fallen very lonely, very lame and broken in this pilgrimage of his; and you cannot help him or cheer him by a kind word any more. From your grave in Ecclefechan kirkyard yonder you bid him trust in God, and that also he will try if he can understand, and *do*. The conquest of the world and of death and hell does verily yet lie in that, if one can understand and do it.

CHAPTER XXII.

A.D. 1854. ÆT. 59.

Crimean war—Louis Napoleon—The sound-proof room—Dreams—Death of John Wilson—Character of Wilson—A journal of a day—The economies of Cheyne Row—Carlyle finances—'Budget of a *Femme Incomprise*.'

THE year 1854 was spent almost entirely in London. Neither Carlyle nor his wife was absent for more than a day or two: she in indifferent health, to which she was stoically resigning herself; he 'in dismal continual wrestle' with 'Frederick,' 'the inexecutable book,' and rather 'in bilious condition,' which meant what we know. The work which he had undertaken was immense; desperate as that of the girl in the fairy tale with the pile of tangled silks before her; and no beneficent godmother to help him through with it; and the *gea* of life, the spring and fire of earlier years, gone out of him. He allowed what was going on in the world to distract him as little as possible; but the sounds of such things broke in upon him, and were as unwelcome as the cocks had been. The Crimean war was in prospect, and the newspapers were crowing as loud as the Demon Fowls.

Journal.

Spring, 1854.—Russian war; soldiers marching off, &c. Never such enthusiasm seen among the population. Cold I as a very stone to all that; seems to me privately I have hardly seen a madder business. 1696 was battle of Zeutha on Theiss; Eugene's task in this world to break the backbone of Turk. A lazy, ugly, sensual, dark fanatic, that Turk, whom we have now had for 400 years. I, for my own private part, would not buy the continuance of *him* there at the rate of sixpence a century. Let him go whenever he can, stay no longer with all *my* heart. It will be a beautifuller, not an uglier, that will come in his place; uglier I should not know where to look for under the sky at present. Then as to Russian increase of strength, &c. Really, I would wait till Russia meddled with me before I drew *sword* to stop his increase of strength. It is the idle population of editors, &c., that have done all this in England. One perceives clearly the ministers go forward in it against their will. Indeed, I have seen no rational person who is not privately very much inclined to be of my own opinion; all fools and loose-spoken inexperienced persons being of the other. It is very disgraceful for any 'ministry' or government; but such is the fate and curse of all ministries here at present, inevitably. Poor souls! What could the ministry *do* after all? To attend to their home affairs, fortify their own coasts, encourage their own fisheries (for new seamen), regulate their own population into or towards proper manliness of spirit and position, and capability of self-defence, and so bid defiance to all the earth, as England peculiarly might—to do this, or any portion of this, is far from them; therefore they must do the other thing. Better speed to them!

The French alliance, into which we were drawn by the Crimean affair, was not, in Carlyle's opinion, a compensating circumstance—very much the reverse. The Revolution of 1848, a weak repetition of 1793, had been followed by a corresponding Napoleonic

Empire, a parody on the first. Carlyle had known Louis Napoleon in England. He had watched him stepping to the throne through perjury and massacre, and had been indignant and ashamed for the nation who could choose or tolerate at its head an adventurer unrecommended by a single virtue. From the first, he was certain that for such a man no good end was to be looked for. It was with a feeling of disgust that he found the English newspapers now hailing the 'scandalous Copper Captain,' as he called him, as the saviour of European order, and a fit ally for England. It was with something more than disgust that he heard of this person paying a visit to the Queen of England, and being welcomed by her as a friend and brother sovereign. The war and its consequences and circumstances he thrust out of his mind, to the utmost possible distance, and thought of other things. To one of these, 'the eighth wonder of the world,' which had sprung into being out of the Great Exhibition, the glass palace at Sydenham, he was less intolerant than might have been expected. At the end of April he spent a Saturday and Sunday with the Ashburtons at Addiscombe.

On Sunday (he tells his brother) we made a pilgrimage to the Crystal Palace, which is but some two miles off, a monstrous mountain of glass building on the top of Sydenham Hill, very conspicuous from Cheyne Walk here. Innumerable objects of Art in it, whole acres of Egyptian monsters, and many really good copies of classical and modern sculpture, which well deserve examination one day. The living visitors not so very numerous in so huge an edifice—probably not above 200—were almost all Jews. Outside were as many thousands of the Christian persuasion —or rather, Christian Cockney—unable to get in. The

whole matter seemed to me to be the very highest flight of Transcendental Cockneyism yet known among mankind. One saw 'Regardless of expense' written on every fibre of it, and written with the best Cockney judgment, yet still with an essentially Cockney one. Regardless of expense! That was the truly grand miracle of it.

At Cheyne Row the great feature was the completion of the 'sound-proof' room, into which he 'was whirled aloft by the angry elements.' It was built above the highest story, the roof being, as it were, lifted over it, and was equal in size to the whole area on which the house stood. A second wall was constructed inside the outer one, with a space between to deaden external noise. There were doors in the inner wall, and windows in the outer, which could be opened for ventilation, but the room itself was lighted from above. It had no outlook except to the sky. Here Carlyle spent his working hours, cut off from everyone—'whirled aloft,' as he said ; angry at the fate which had driven him into such a refuge, and finding in it, when finished, the faults inseparable from all human contrivances. But he did admit that 'the light was superb,' that all 'softer sounds were killed on the road to him, and that of sharp sounds scarce the thirtieth part could penetrate.' The cocks had been finally abolished, *purchased* out of existence by a 5*l.* note and Mrs. Carlyle's diplomacy. Thus they 'were quiet as mice,' he working with all his might, dining out nowhere, save once with the Proctors, to meet Dickens, and 'finding it the most hideous evening he had had for years.' Under these conditions, 'Frederick' ought to have made progress, if it could progress at all. But it seemed as if it could not.

Journal.

April, 1854.—No way made with my book, nor like to be made. I am in a heavy, stupefying state of health, too, and have no capacity of grasping the big chaos that lies round me, and reducing it to order. Order! Reducing! It is like compelling the grave to give up its dead, were it rightly done, and I am in no capacity for working such a miracle. Yet all things point to work—tell me sternly enough that except in work there is simply no hope for me at all, no good that *can* now come to me.

I read old German books, dull as stupidity itself—nay, superannuated stupidity—gain with labour the dreariest glimpses of unimportant, extinct human things in that region of the world; but when I begin operating; *how* to reduce that widespread black desert of Brandenburg sand to a small human garden—alas! alas! But let me not spend time here making matters *worse*. Surely now I *am* at the bottom of the wheel. I dream horribly—the fruit of incurable biliousness: waste scenes of solitary desolation, gathered from Craigenputtock, as I now perceive, but tenfold *intensated*; endless uplands of scraggy moors, with gnarls of lichened crag of a stern ugliness, for always I am quite a *hermit* there too—fit to go into Dante's 'Inferno'; with other visions less speakable, of a similar type. Every vision, I find, is the express symbol and suitable representative of the mood of mind then possessing me. Also, it is sometimes *weeks after* the actual dream, as of these Dantesque Galloway moors, when some other analogous dream or circumstance first brings them to my waking recollection—a thing rather curious to me. But nearly all my dreams in this world have come from bodily conditions of the nerves, I think; and ninety-nine out of every hundred have been ugly and painful, very stupid too, and weak, and, on the whole, by no means worth having, could one have avoided them. For the rest, I find nothing sublime in the act of dreaming, nor even anything very strange. Shut your eyes at any time, there will be a phantasmagory of thoughts and images

begin parading in unbroken series through your head. To sleep is but to shut your eyes and outer senses a little better. I have an impression that one always *dreams*, but that only in cases where the nerves are disturbed by bad health, which produces light, imperfect sleep, do they start into such relief—call it agony and antagony—as to force themselves on our waking consciousness. On the whole, the miracle of dreams was never much of a miracle to me, and now, this long while, none at all, beyond what everything is.

Advancing years have one inseparable accompaniment, painful if we like to make it so, or soft and sad, as an ordinance of nature—a thing which has to be, and must be so accepted. Each season takes away with it more and more of the friends whom we have known and loved, cutting one by one the strings which attach us to our present lives, and lightening the reluctance with which we recognise our own time approaching. Anyone at all that we have personally known has a friendly aspect when we hear that he is dead. Even if he has done us an ill turn, he cannot do it again. We forget the injuries we have received, because, after all, they did not seriously hurt us; we remember the injuries which we have done, because they are past remedy. With the dead, whatever they were, we only desire to be at peace. Between John Wilson and Carlyle there had never been any cordial relation. They had met in Edinburgh in the old days; on Carlyle's part there had been no backwardness, and Wilson was not unconscious of Carlyle's extraordinary powers. But he had been shy of Carlyle, and Carlyle had resented it, and now this April the news came that Wilson was gone, and Carlyle had to write his epitaph.

Journal.

April 29, 1854.—John Wilson dead at Edinburgh about ten days ago. Apoplexy had gradually cut him out of the lists of the active, years ago, and for six months had quite broken his memory, &c., and rendered recovery hopeless. I knew his figure well; remember well first seeing him in Princes Street on a bright April afternoon—probably 1814—exactly forty years ago. Princes Street, on bright afternoons, was then the promenade of Edinburgh, and I, as a student, had gone among the others to see the καλαί and the καλοί; one Campbell, some years older than myself, was walking with me in the crowd. A tall ruddy figure, with plenteous blonde hair, with bright blue eyes, fixed, as if in haste towards some distant object, strode rapidly along, clearing the press to the left of us, close by the railings, near where Blackwood's shop now is. Westward he in haste; we slowly eastward. Campbell whispered me, 'That is Wilson of the "Isle of Palms,"' which poem I had not read, being then quite mathematical, scientific, &c., for extraneous reasons, as I now see them to have been. The broad-shouldered stately bulk of the man struck me; his flashing eye, copious, dishevelled head of hair, and rapid, unconcerned progress, like that of a plough through stubble. I really liked him, but only from the distance, and thought no more of him. It must have been fourteen years later before I once saw his figure again, and began to have some distant straggling acquaintance of a personal kind with him. Glad could I have been to be better and more familiarly acquainted; but though I liked much in him, and he somewhat in me, it would not do. He was always very kind to me, but seemed to have a feeling I should—could—not become wholly his, in which he was right, and that on other terms he could not have me; so we let it so remain, and for many years—indeed, even after quitting Edinburgh I had no acquaintance with him; occasionally got symptoms of his ill-humour with me—ink-spurts in 'Blackwood,' read or heard of, which I, in a surly, silent manner, strove to

consider *flattering* rather. Poor Wilson! I cannot remember ever to have at all much respected his judgment, or depth of sincere insight into anything whatever; and by this time I was abroad in fields quite foreign to him, where his word was of less and less avail to me. In London, indeed, I seldom or never heard any talk of him. I never read his blustering, drunken 'Noctes' after Gordon in Edinburgh ceased to bring them to me. We lived apart, as in different centuries; though, to say the truth, I always loved Wilson —really rather loved him, and could have fancied a most strict and very profitable *friendship* between us in different, happier circumstances. But it was not to be. It was not the way of this poor epoch, nor a possibility of the century we lived in. One had to bid adieu to it therefore. Wilson had much nobleness of heart, and many traits of noble genius, but the central *tie-beam* seemed always wanting; very long ago I perceived in him the most irreconcilable contradictions, Toryism with *sansculottism*; Methodism of a sort with total incredulity; a noble, loyal, and religious nature, not *strong* enough to vanquish the perverse element it is born into. Hence a being all split into precipitous chasms and the wildest volcanic tumults; rocks overgrown, indeed, with tropical luxuriance of leaf and flower, but knit together at the bottom—that was my old figure of speech—only by an ocean—of whisky punch. On these terms nothing can be done. Wilson seemed to me always by far the most *gifted* of all our literary men, either then or still; and yet intrinsically he has written nothing that can endure. The central gift was wanting. Adieu! adieu! oh, noble, ill-starred brother! Who shall say I am not myself *farther* wrong, and in a more hopeless course and case, though on the opposite side. . . . Wilson spoke always in a curious dialect, full of humour and ingenuity, but with an uncomfortable wavering between jest and earnest, as if it were his interest and unconscious purpose to *conceal* his real meaning in most things. So far as I can recollect, he was once in my house (Comely Bank, with a testimonial, poor fellow!) and I once in his, De Quincey, &c., a little while

one afternoon. One night, at Gordon's, I supped with him, or witnessed *his* supper—ten or twelve tumblers of whisky punch, continued till the daylight shone in on him and us; and such a *firework* of wildly ingenious—I should say volcanically vivid—hearty, humorous, and otherwise remarkable, entertaining, and *not* venerable talk (Wordsworth, Dugald Stewart, many men, as well as things, came in for a lick), as I never listened to before or since. We walked homewards together through the summer sunrise, I remember well. Good Wilson! Poor Wilson! That must be twenty-six years ago. I know not if among all his 'friends' he has left one who feels more recognisingly what he was, and how tragical his life when seemingly most successful, than I now. Adieu to him, good, grand, ruined soul, that never could be great, or, indeed, *be* anything. This present is a ruinous and ruining world.

In the obituary of this spring the name of another Scotchman appeared—of more national temperament—on whom Carlyle also leaves a few words.

A few days later (Wednesday last) there died also at Edinburgh Lord Cockburn, a figure from my early years: Jeffrey's biographer and friend; in all respects the converse or contrast of Wilson—rustic Scotch sense, sincerity, and humour, all of the practical Scotch type, *versus* the *Neopoetical* Wordsworthian, Coleridgean, extremely chaotic 'Church of the Future,' if Calvary, Parnassus, and whisky punch can ever be supposed capable of growing into anything but a dungheap of the future or past. Cockburn, small, solid, and genuine, was by much the wholesomer product; a bright, cheery-voiced, hazel-eyed man; a Scotch dialect with plenty of good logic in it, and of practical sagacity. Veracious, too. A gentleman, I should say, and perfectly in the Scotch type, perhaps the very last of that peculiar species.

Carlyle's own special work at this time was confined almost to reading books. The little that he

composed was unsatisfactory, and the entries in his journal, which were unusually numerous in the period of forced inactivity, were at once an occupation and a relief. When once he was launched upon his enterprise, he had little leisure for self-reflection. A long vacant interval was soon to follow in the journal; here is one more passage from it—one more open window into his inner soul:—

Journal.

June 15, 1854.—Being to all appearance just about the *nadir* in my affairs at present, solitary, without any human being to whom I can with profit communicate myself, and totally unable, from illness, &c., to get any hold of the ugly chaos, wide as the world, which I am called to subdue into the form of *work done*, I rushed out yesterday and took a violent, long, fatiguing walk into the sunny precincts of Tooting, &c., that at least I might be quite alone with my unbeautiful self and my ditto affairs. A beautiful, soft, bright day; the sky unusually clear, moist clouds floating about upon the wind far enough aloft, and the sun shining out from time to time. Sitting silent on Wandsworth Common, remote amid the furze bushes, I said, 'Suppose we write a *journal of a week*? the time of *acti labores* may once again come, in spite of all appearances to the contrary, and then it will be pleasant to look back.' I did not much entertain the project, nor at this time am I clear to do it. Here, however, is yesterday:—Wrote some business notes *invitissimâ Minervâ* after breakfast; had lost the little dog, &c., who, however, was found about noon. Then examined the scribble I had been doing about *Jülich* and *Berg*; *Preussen*, &c. Totally without worth! Decided to run out, as above said. Out at half-past one p.m.; return towards five. Asleep on the sofa before dinner at half-past five; take my 'Schlosser,' vol. 4; can do little at it till tea. Not a bad book, though very crabbed and lean. Brother

John [1] enters at eight; gossip with him till nine; then out to escort him home, getting three-quarters of an hour of walking to myself withal. Had refused the Lowe *soirée* before. Jane poorly; in a low way for some days back. Read till one a.m., she soon leaving me. To bed then, having learned little; how little! To-day I am at my desk again; intend to try Liegnitz and Silesian matters. Small hope there. My eyes are very dim; bad light (from sky direct), though abundant. Chiefly the state of liver, I suppose, which indeed in itself and its effects is beyond description. Have taken to iron pens; compelled to it by the ever-fluctuating 'cheap and nasty' system which has prevailed in regard to paper and ink everywhere for twenty years past, which system, worse to me almost than the loss of an arm, not to mention money at all, may the Devil confound, as indeed he does. *Basta! Basta!* Liegnitz itself will be better than that.

So far Carlyle on himself and his affairs. I will now add a piece of writing of his wife's, which throws light on the domestic economies of Cheyne Row, and shows how life was carried on there, with what skill, with what thrift, under what conditions, personal and material. Her letters indirectly tell much, but this particular composition is directly addressed to that special subject. There was a discussion some years ago in the newspapers whether two people with the habits of a lady and a gentleman could live together in London on 300*l.* a year. Mrs. Carlyle, who often laughed about it while it was going on, will answer the question. Miss Jewsbury says that no one who visited the Carlyles could tell whether they were poor or rich. There were no signs of extravagance, but also none of poverty. The drawing-room arrange-

[1] John Carlyle had come with his wife to live in London. She died tragically two months later in her first confinement.

ments were exceptionally elegant. The furniture was simple, but solid and handsome; everything was scrupulously clean; everything good of its kind; and there was an air of ease, as of a household living within its means. Mrs. Carlyle was well dressed always. Her admirable taste would make the most of inexpensive materials; but the materials themselves were of the very best. Carlyle himself generally kept a horse. They travelled, they visited, they were always generous and open-handed. They had their house on easy terms. The rent, which when they came first was 30*l.* a year, I think was never raised—out of respect for Carlyle's character; but it had many rooms in it, which, because they could not bear to have them otherwise, were maintained in the best condition. There was much curiosity among their friends to know how their establishment was supported. Mrs. Carlyle had 150*l.* a year from Craigenputtock. He himself, in a late calculation, had set down his average income from his books at another 150*l.* For several years before the time at which we have now arrived he had published little which materially added to this. There was a fixed annual demand for his works, but not a large one. The 'Cromwell' was a large book, and had gone through three editions. I do not know precisely how much he had received from it; perhaps 1,500*l.* The 'Latter-day Pamphlets' had produced little beyond paying their expenses. The 'Life of Sterling' was popular, but that too only in a limited circle. Carlyle was thrifty, but never penurious; he gave away profusely in his own family, and was liberal beyond his means elsewhere. He had saved, I think,

about 2,000*l.* in all, which was lying at interest in Dumfries bank, and this was all. Thus his entire income at this time could not have exceeded 400*l.*, if it was as much. His German tour had been expensive. The new room had cost 170*l.* The cost of living was increasing through the rise in prices, which no economy could guard against, and though they had but one servant the household books mounted disagreeably. Mrs. Carlyle, not wishing to add to her husband's troubles, had as far as possible kept her anxieties to herself. Indeed, Carlyle was like most husbands in this matter, and was inclined to be irritable when spoken to about it. But an explanation at last became necessary, and the humorous acidity of tone with which she entered on it shows that she had borne much before she presented her statement. It is dated February 12, 1855, and is endorsed by Carlyle 'Jane's Missive on the Budget,' with a note appended.

The enclosed was read with great laughter; had been found lying on my table as I returned out of the frosty garden from smoking. Debt is already paid off. Quarterly income to be 58*l.* henceforth, and all is settled to poor Goody's heart's content. The piece is so clever that I cannot just yet find in my heart to burn it, as perhaps I ought to do. T. C.

Budget of a Femme Incomprise.

I don't choose to *speak* again on the *money question!* The 'replies' from the Noble Lord are unfair and unkind, and little to the purpose. When you tell me 'I pester your life out about money,' that 'your soul is sick with hearing about it,' that 'I had better make the money I have serve,' 'at all rates, hang it, let you alone of it'—all that I call

perfectly unfair, the reverse of kind, and tending to nothing but disagreement. If I were greedy or extravagant or a bad manager, you would be justified in 'staving me off' with loud words; but you cannot say *that* of me (whatever else) — cannot *think* it of me. At least, I am sure that I never 'asked for more' from you or anyone, not even from my own mother, in all my life, and that through six and twenty years I have kept house for you at more or less cost according to given circumstances, but always on less than it costs the generality of people living in the same style. What I should have expected you to say rather would have been: 'My dear, you *must* be dreadfully hampered in your finances, and dreadfully anxious and unhappy about it, and quite desperate of *making it do*, since *you* are "asking for more." Make me understand the case, then. I can and will help you out of that *sordid* suffering at least, either by giving you more, if that be found prudent to do, or by reducing our wants to within the present means.' That is the sort of thing you would have said had you been a perfect man; so I suppose you are not a perfect man. Then, instead of crying in my bed half the night after, I would have explained my budget to you in peace and confidence. But now I am driven to explain it on paper 'in a state of mind;' *driven*, for I cannot, it is not in my nature to live 'entangled in the details,' and I *will not*. I would sooner hang myself, though 'pestering you about money' is also more repugnant to me than you dream of.

You don't understand why the allowance which sufficed in former years no longer suffices. That is what I would explain to the Noble Lord if he would but—what shall I say?—*keep his temper*.

The beginning of my embarrassments, it will not surprise the Noble Lord to learn, since it has also been 'the beginning of' almost every human ill to himself, was *the repairing of the house*. There was a destruction, an *irregularity*, an *incessant recurrence of small incidental expenses*, during all that period, or *two* periods, through which I found myself in September gone a year, *ten* pounds behind, instead of

having some pounds saved up towards the winter's coals. I could have worked round 'out of that,' however, in course of time, if habits of *unpinched* housekeeping had not been long taken to by *you* as well as myself, and if new unavoidable or not to be avoided *current* expenses had not followed close on those incidental ones. I will show the Noble Lord, with his permission, what the new current expenses *are*, and to what they amount per annum. (Hear, hear! and cries of 'Be brief!')

1. We have a servant of 'higher grade' than we ever ventured on before; more expensive in money. Anne's wages are 16 pounds a year; Fanny's were 13. Most of the others had 12; and Anne never dreams of being other than *well fed*. The others *scrambled* for their living out of ours. Her regular meat dinner at one o'clock, regular allowance of butter, &c., adds at least three pounds a year to the *year's* bills. But she plagues us with no fits of illness nor of *drunkenness*, no *warnings* nor complainings. She does perfectly what she is *paid* and *fed* to do. I see houses not so well kept with 'cook,' 'housemaid,' and 'manservant' (Question!). Anne is the last item I should vote for retrenching in. I may set her down, however, at six additional pounds.

2. We have now gas and water 'laid on,' both producing admirable results. But betwixt 'water laid on' at one pound sixteen shillings per annum, with *shilling* to turncock, and water carried at fourpence a week there is a yearly difference of 19 shillings and four pence; and betwixt *gas* all the year round and a few sixpenny boxes of lights in the winter the difference may be computed at *fifteen shillings*. These two excellent innovations, then, increase the yearly expenditure by one pound fourteen shillings and four pence—a trifle to speak of; but you, my Lord, born and bred in thrifty Scotland, must know well the proverb, 'Every little mak's a mickle.'

3. We are higher *taxed*. Within the last eighteen months there has been added to the Lighting, Pavement, and Improvement Rate ten shillings yearly, to the Poor Rate

one pound, to the sewer rate ten shillings; and now the doubled Income Tax makes a difference of 5*l.* 16*s.* 8*d.* yearly, which sums, added together, amount to a difference of 7*l.* 16*s.* 8*d.* yearly, on taxes which already amounted to 17*l.* 12*s.* 8*d.* There need be no reflections for want of taxes.

4. Provisions of all sorts are higher priced than in former years. Four shillings a week for bread, instead of two shillings and sixpence, makes at the year's end a difference of 3*l.* 18*s.* Butter has kept all the year round 2*d.* a pound dearer than I ever knew it. On the quantity we use—two pounds and a half per week 'quite reg'lar'—there is a difference of 21*s.* 8*d.* by the year. Butcher's meat is a penny a pound dearer. At the rate of a pound and a half a day, *bones* included—no exorbitant allowance for three people—the difference on that at the year's end would be 2*l.* 5*s.* 6*d.* Coals, which had been for some years at 21*s.* per ton, cost this year 26*s.*, last year 29*s.*, bought judiciously, too. If I had had to pay 50*s.* a ton for them, as some housewives had to, God knows what would have become of me. (Passionate cries of 'Question! question!') We burn, or used to burn—I am afraid they are going faster this winter—twelve tons, one year with another. Candles are *riz*: composites a shilling a pound, instead of 10*d.*; dips 8 pence, instead of 5*d.* or 6*d.* Of the former we burn three pounds in nine days—the greater part of the year you sit so late—and of dips two pounds a fortnight on the average of the whole year. Bacon is 2*d.* a pound dearer; soap ditto; potatoes, at the cheapest, a penny a pound, instead of three pounds for 2*d.* We use three pounds of potatoes in two days' meals. Who could imagine that at the year's end that makes a difference of 15*s.* 2*d.* on one's mere potatoes? Compute all this, and you will find that the difference on *provisions* cannot be under twelve pounds in the year.

5. What I should blush to state if I were not *at bay*, so to speak: ever since we have been in London *you* have, in the handsomest manner, paid the winter's butter with *your own money*, though it was not in the bond. And this

gentlemanlike proceeding on your part, till the butter became uneatable, was a good two pounds saved me.

Add up these differences:—

	£	s.	d.
1. Rise on servant	6	0	0
2. Rise on light and water .	1	14	0
3. On taxes	7	16	8
4. On provisions	12	0	0
5. Cessation of butter . . .	2	0	0
You will find a total of	£29	10	8

My calculation will be found quite correct, though I am not strong in arithmetic. I have *thochtered* all this well in my head, and *indignation* makes a sort of arithmetic, as well as verses. Do you finally understand why the allowance which sufficed formerly no longer suffices, and pity my difficulties instead of being angry at them?

The only thing you *can* reproach me with, *if you like*, is that fifteen months ago, when I found myself already in debt, and everything *rising* on me, I did not fall at once to *pinching* and *muddling*, as when we didn't know where the next money was to come from, instead of 'lashing down' at the accustomed rate: nay, expanding into a 'regular servant.' But you are to recollect that when I first complained to you of the *prices*, you said, quite good-naturedly, 'Then you are coming to bankruptcy, are you? Not going to be able *to go on*, you think? Well, then, we must come to your assistance, poor *crittur*. You mustn't be made a bankrupt of.' So I kept my mind easy, and retrenched in nothing, relying on the promised 'assistance.' But when 'Oh! it was lang o' coming, lang o' coming,' my arrears taking every quarter a more alarming cifer, what could I do but put you in mind? Once, twice, at the third speaking, what you were pleasantly calling 'a great heap of money'—15*l.*—was —what shall I say?—flung to me. Far from *leaving anything* to meet the increased demand of another nine months, this sum did not clear me of debt, not by five pounds. But from time to time encouraging *words* fell from the

Noble Lord. 'No, you cannot pay the double Income Tax; clearly, I must pay that for you.' And again: 'I will burn as many coals as I like; if you can't pay for them somebody must!' All resulting, however, thus far in '*Don't you wish you may get it?*' Decidedly I should have needed to be more than mortal, or else 'a born daughter of Chaos,' to have gone on without attempt made at ascertaining what *coming to my assistance* meant: whether it meant 15*l.* without a blessing once for all; and, if so, what retrenchments were to be permitted.

You asked me at last money row, with withering sarcasm, 'had I the slightest idea what amount of money would *satisfy me.* Was I wanting 50*l.* more; or forty, or thirty? Was there any conceivable sum of money that could put an end to my eternal botheration?' I will answer the question as if it had been asked practically and kindly.

Yes. I have the strongest idea what amount of money would '*satisfy*' me. I have computed it often enough as I lay awake at nights. Indeed, when I can't sleep now it is my 'difficulties' I think about more than my sins, till they become 'a real mental awgony in my own inside.' The above-named sum, 29*l.*, divided into quarterly payments, would *satisfy* me (with a certain parsimony about little things somewhat less might do), I engaging my word of a gentlewoman to *give back* at the year's end whatever portion thereof any diminution of the demand on me might enable me to save.

I am not so unpractical, however, as to ask for the whole 29*l.* without thought or care where it is to come from. I have settled all that (Derisive laughter, and Hear, hear!), so that nine pounds only will have to be disbursed by you over and above your long-accustomed disbursements (Hear, hear!). You anticipate, perhaps, some draft on your waste-paper basket. No, my Lord, it has never been my habit to interfere with your ways of making money, or the rate which you make it at; and if I never did it in early years, most unlikely I should do it *now.* My bill of ways and means has nothing to do with making money, only with disposing of the money made. (Bravo! hear!)

1. Ever since my mother's death you have allowed me for old Mary Mills 3*l.* yearly. She needs them no more. *Continue these three pounds for the house.*

2. Through the same long term of years you have made *me* the handsomest Christmas and birthday presents; and when I had purposely disgusted you from *buying me things*, you gave me at the New Year 5*l.* Oh I know the meaning of that 5*l.* quite well. *Give me nothing*; neither money nor money's worth. I would have it so anyhow, and continue the 5*l.* for the house.

3. Ever since we came to London you have paid some 2*l.*, I guess, for *butter*, now become uneatable. Continue that 2*l.* for the house; and we have already *ten* pounds which you can't miss, not having been used to them.

4. My allowance of 25*l.* is a very liberal one; has enabled me to spend freely for myself; and I don't deny there is a pleasure in that when there is no household crisis; but with an appalling deficit in the house exchequer, it is not only no pleasure but an impossibility. I can keep up my dignity and my wardrobe on a less sum—on 15*l.* a year. A silk dress, 'a splendid dressing-gown,' 'a milliner's bonnet' the less; what signifies that at my age? Nothing. Besides, I have had so many 'gowns' given me that they may serve for two or three years. By then God knows if I shall be needing *gowns* at all. So deduct 10*l.* from my personal allowance; and continue that for the house.

But why not transfer it *privately* from my own purse to the house one, and ask only for 19*l.*? It would have sounded more modest—*figured* better. Just because 'that sort of thing' don't please me. I have tried it and found it a bad *go*: a virtue *not* its own reward! I am for every herring to hang by its own head, every purse to stand on its own bottom. It would worry me to be thought rolling in the wealth of 25*l.*, when I was cleverly making 15*l.* do, and investing 10*l.* in coals and taxes. Mrs. —— is up to that sort of self-sacrifice thing, and to finding compensation in the sympathy of many friends, and in smouldering discontent. I am up to neither the magnanimity nor the compensation, but I am

quite up to laying down 10*l.* of my allowance in a straightforward recognised way, without standing on my toes to it either. And what is more, I am determined upon it, *will not* accept more than 15*l.* in the present state of affairs.

There only remains to disclose the actual state of the exchequer. It is empty as a drum. (Sensation.) If I consider twenty-nine more pounds indispensable—things remaining as they are—for the coming year, beginning the 22nd of March, it is just because I have found it so in the year that is gone; and I commenced that, as I have already stated, with 10*l.* of arrears. You assisted me with 15*l.*, and I have assisted myself with 10*l.*, five last August, which I took from the Savings Bank, and the five you gave me at New Year, which I threw into the coal account. Don't suppose—'if thou's i' the habit of supposing'—that I tell you this in the *un*devout imagination of being *repaid.* By all that's sacred for me—*the memory of my father and mother*—what else can an irreligious creature like me swear by? I would not take back that money if you *offered* it with the best grace, and had picked it up in the street. I tell it you simply that you may see I am not so dreadfully greedy as you have appeared to think me latterly. Setting *my* 10*l.* then against the original arrears, with 15*l.* in assistance from *you*, it would follow, from my own computation, that I should need 14*l.* more to clear off arrears on the weekly bills and carry me on paying my way until 22nd of March, next quarter-day. (Cries of Shame! and Turn her out!) I say only '*should need.*' Your money is of course yours, to do as you will with, and I *would like* to again 'walk the causeway' carrying my head as high—as —Mr. A., the upholsterer, owing no man anything, and *dearly I would like* to 'at all rates let YOU alone of it,' if I knew who else had any business with my housekeeping, or to whom else I could properly address myself for the moment; as what with that expensive, most ill-timed dressing-gown, and *my* cheap ill-timed chiffonnier, and my half-year's bills to Rhind and Catchpole, I have only what will serve me till June comes round.

If I was a man, I might fling the gauntlet to Society, join with a few brave fellows, and 'rob a diligence.' But my sex 'kind o' debars from that.' Mercy! to think there are women—your friend Lady A., for example ('*Rumeurs!*' Sensation)—I say for *example*; who spend not merely the additamental pounds I must make such pother about, but *four times my whole income* in the *ball* of one night, and none the worse for it, nor anyone the better. It is—what shall I say?—'curious,' upon my honour. But just in the same manner Mrs. Freeman might say: 'To think there are women—Mrs. Carlyle, for example—who spend 3*l.* 14*s.* 6*d.* on one dressing-gown, and I with just *two loaves* and eighteen pence from the parish, to live on by the week.' There is no bottom to such reflections. The only thing one is perfectly sure of is 'it will come all to the same ultimately,' and I can't say I'll regret the loss of myself, for one.—I add no more, but remain, dear Sir, your obedient humble servant,

JANE WELSH CARLYLE.

Mrs. Carlyle, it must be admitted, knew how to administer a 'shrewing.' Her poor husband, it must be admitted, also knew how to bear one. He, perhaps, bore it too well, for there were parts of what she said which he might with advantage have laid to heart seriously. At any rate, he recognized instantly and without the least resentment the truth of a statement to which he had been too impatient to listen. The cleverness of it delighted him, in spite of the mockery of himself and his utterances. At the foot of the last page he wrote immediately—

Excellent, my dear clever Goody, thriftiest, wittiest, and cleverest of women. I will set thee up again to a certainty, and thy 30*l.* more shall be granted, thy bits of debts paid, and thy will be done.

T. C.

Feb. 12, 1855.

No man ever behaved better under such a chastisement. Not a trace is visible of resentment or impatience, though also less regret than a perfect husband ought to have felt that he had to a certain extent deserved it. Unfortunately, knowing that he had meant no harm and had done all that he was asked to do the instant that the facts were before him, he never could take a lesson of this kind properly to heart, and could be just as inconsiderate and just as provoking on the next occasion that arose. Poor Carlyle! Well he might complain of his loneliness! though he was himself in part the cause of it. Both he and she were noble and generous, but his was the soft heart, and hers the stern one.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A.D. 1854–7. ÆT. 59–62.

Difficulties over 'Frederick'—Crimean war—Louis Napoleon in England—Edward Fitzgerald—Farlingay—Three weeks at Addiscombe—Mrs. Carlyle and Lady Ashburton—Scotsbrig—Kinloch Luichart—Lady Ashburton's death—Effect on Carlyle—Solitude in Cheyne Row—Riding costume—Fritz—Completion of the first two volumes of 'Frederick'—Carlyle as a historian.

Journal.

Chelsea, September 16, 1854.—'The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved.' What a fearful word! I cannot find how to take up that miserable 'Frederick,' or what on earth to do with it. 'Hohenzollerns,' 'Sketches of German History'—something of all that I have tried, but everything breaks down from innumerable outward impediments—alas! alas! from the defect of inward fire. I am getting old, yet would grudge to depart without trying to tell a little more of my mind. This of repairing my house has been a dreadful thing, tumbling topsy-turvy all my old habits, &c. I feel as if I never *could* write any more in these sad, altered circumstances; as if it were like being placed on the point of a spear, and there bidden at once stand and write. That was my thought this morning when I awoke—an unjust, exaggerated thought; yet it is certain all depends on myself; and in the whole earth, probably, there is not elsewhere so lonely a soul. To work! Try to get some work done, or thou wilt go mad.

October 25.—I do not write here, or write at all, to say how ill I prosper, how ill I *manage* myself; what a sad outlook my studies, interests, and endeavours in this world continue to offer. I seem as if beaten, disgracefully vanquished, in this 'the last of my fields.' I am weak—a poor angry-hearted mortal, sick, solitary, and altogether foiled. For a week or two past I have been to the State Paper Office, in hopes of getting some illumination for my dim, dreary, impossible course through the 'desert of Brandenburg sand.' Occasionally it has seemed promising. Neuberg has now been admitted, or will be in a day or two, to attend me there, the good man having heroically undertaken that piece of charity. Let us see; let us see. Nothing but '*remorse*,' the sharp sting of conscience for time wasted, carries me along, or even induces such a resolution for desperate effort as *could* carry me along. Alas! I am not yet *into* the thing. Generally, it seems as if I never should or could get into it. What will become of me? Am I absolutely beaten by this and the thousand other paltry things that have gone wrong with me in these late times?

'Victory at the Alma!' fierce and bloody; forcing a passage right across fortified heights and 45,000 Russians, to *begin* the siege of Sebastopol—a terrible, and almost horrible operation, done altogether at the command of the newspapers. What have I to do with all that? In common, I believe, with nearly all the rational men in the country, I have all along been totally indisposed to this miserable Turk war. The windy fools alone—it is the immense majority of that class, that have done and do this last enterprise of ours. Would we were well out of it. That is all my prayer and thought in regard to that.

April 4, 1855.—Writing at something called 'Frederick.' The 'Double Marriage' at present most mournful, dreary, undoable work. All the world in emotion about Balaclava and the Turk war—too sad a fulfilment of my 'Latter Day' prophecies, as many now admit. I perceive it to be the beginning of *bankruptcy* to Constitutional England, and have in silence my own thoughts about it.

Lonelier and lonelier! Let me get along with my work. For me there is no other good ever to be hoped.

If he needed comfort, he was not likely to find it in the things which were going on round him. It was no satisfaction to him that the state of the army in the Crimea—the dysentery and starvation, with the memorable 'take care of Dowb' in the midst of it—confirmed his notions of the nature of modern British administration. In this April came the still more sinister phenomenon of the visit to England of the French Emperor. On this point, if on no other, he was at one with the majority of his countrymen. Outside the privileged circles who wanted order preserved, and security to property, and safe enjoyment of idle luxury, Louis Napoleon had no friends among us. But the times were hard, and we looked on, swallowing down our disgust as best we could, while the man of December was entertained at Windsor. It was said in the papers that he was received in London by enthusiastic crowds. That was not Carlyle's impression from what he himself saw.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: April 20, 1855.

Louis Napoleon has not been shot hitherto. That is the best that can be said. He gathers, they say, great crowds about him, but his reception from the hip-hip-hurrahing classes is not warm at all. On Monday, just before they arrived, I came (in omnibus) down Piccadilly. Two thin and thinnest rows of the most abject-looking human wretches I had ever seen or dreamt of—lame, crook-backed, dwarfish, dirty-shirted, with the air of pickpockets and City jackals, not a *gent* hardly among them, much less any vestige of a gentleman—were drawn up from St. James's Street to Hyde Park

Corner to receive the august pair. I looked at them with a shuddering thankfulness that they were not drawn up to receive *me.*

April 23.—We have got done with our Emperor. Thank Heaven, he took himself away before the week ended. Never was such a blaze of enthusiastic reception, &c., says rumour, which I for my own share cannot confirm or decisively contradict. Royal children all weeping when the *soi-disant* august pair took themselves away again—*à la bonne heure!*

Very bitter this—too bitter as we look back, perhaps. Louis Napoleon was a symbol and creature of his time, which divided with him the crime of the *coup d'état.* He had his day, and paid his debt at the end of it to the retributory powers. But while his day lasted and he seemed to thrive, he was an ugly object in the eyes of those who believed in some sort of Providence.

'Frederick' meanwhile, in spite of lamentations over failure, was at last moving. Carlyle had stood steadily to it for eighteen months, and when August came he required rest and change. Many friends were eager for the honour of entertaining him. There was no longer any mother to call him down to Scotsbrig. He selected among them Mr. Edward Fitzgerald, who had been useful to him in the 'Cromwell' days, investigating Naseby field, and whose fine gifts of intellect and character he heartily loved and admired. Mr. Fitzgerald lived at Woodbridge, near Farlingay, in Suffolk, an old-fashioned mansion-house of his own, in which he occupied a few rooms, the rest being a farm-house. The scene was new to him. A Suffolk farmer, 'with a dialect almost equal to Nithsdale,' was a fresh experience. The farm

cookery was simple and wholesome, the air perfect, the sea, with a beach where he could bathe, at no great distance; his host ready to be the pleasantest of companions if his society was wished for, and as willing 'to efface himself' when not wanted. Under these conditions, a 'retreat' for a few days to Woodbridge was altogether agreeable. The love which all persons who really knew him felt for Carlyle made it a delight to minister to his comfort. His humours were part of himself. They took him as he was, knowing well how amply his conversation would pay for his entertainment. He, for his part, enjoyed himself exceptionally; he complained of nothing. Place, lodging, company were equally to his mind.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Farlingay, August 10.

As to me, all things go prosperously. I made an excellent sleep out last night—at least, two sleeps added together that amounted to excellent. You see I have skill in the weather too. Here are the sunny autumn days begun, and this, the first of them, has been one of the beautifullest that could be desired; as nice a morning as I remember to have seen, and your letter waiting for me, and good Fitz sitting patient on a big block—huge stump of a tree-root, on which they have sown mignonette—at the head of the garden till I pleased to come down. I have sauntered about, reading, in the fields. We drove in the gig: afterwards I walked lustily through pleasant lanes and quiet country roads, all of hard, smooth sand; in short, a day suitable to my purpose in coming here. I already seem to feel twice as strong for walking; step along at a great rate in spite of the windless heat. I design to have a try again at the sea to-morrow.

August 13.

There have been some adventures here, or rather one adventure, but all goes right after it as much as before.

It was an adventure of cows. Cows go in a field—or rather went, but do not now go—opposite this big window, separated merely by the garden and an invisible fence. The night after I wrote last, these animals, about 2 a.m., took to lowing with an energy to have awakened the seven sleepers. No soul could guess why; but there they raged and lowed through the night watches, awoke the whole house here, and especially awoke me, and held me vigilant till six, when I arose for a walk through fields and lanes. No evil came of it, only endless sorrow of poor Fitz and the household, endless apologies, &c. The cows were removed, and I have slept well ever since, and am really growing better and better in my silent rustication here. Fitz took me down yesterday to Aldborough, a very pleasant drive—seventeen miles; off at 8 A.M., home about the same hour of evening. It is a beautiful little sea town, one of the best bathing-places I have seen. Nothing can excel the sea—a mile of fine shingly beach, with patches of smooth sand every here and there; clear water shelving rapidly, deep at all hours; beach solitary beyond wont, whole town rather solitary. My notion is, if you have yet gone nowhere, you should think of Aldborough. If a lodging could be had there, which is probable, I could like very well to take a fortnight or so of it. Never saw a place more promising. . . . Adieu, dearest! Drown Nero, and be reasonable.—Yours ever, T. C.

August 17.

No news from you to-day, which I will take to mean that there is no bad news, all things remaining with Goody, as they do with *Illy*, *in statu quo*. I have bathed; I have been driven about. Weather hot and shining, without wind. Last night I slept unusually well, and to-morrow I am to go. Fitz has been the best of landlords, and has discharged the sacred rites really with a kind of Irish zeal and piety; a man not to be forgotten. He has done everything except 'leave me well alone;' that he has not quite done; and to say truth, I shall not care to be off and lie down in my own corner again, even with the sputter of Cremorne in the distance.

Restless spirit! for 'in his own corner,' when 'he did lie down in it,' he grew 'sleepless, disconsolate, and good for little or nothing.' The Ashburtons, knowing his condition, offered him Addiscombe again for the short remains of the summer, and there he and Mrs Carlyle tried to make a brief holiday together. It did not answer. She preferred Chelsea and solitude, and left him to wander about the Surrey lanes alone.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Addiscombe: September 2, 1855. Sunday midnight.

My poor little Jeannie is away. You may fancy, or rather, perhaps, in your spleen you will not fancy, what a dreary *wae* sight it was to me this morning when I sallied out, stupid and sad, and found your door open, the *one* cup downstairs, tea-pot washed out. 'Mrs. Carlyle gone at eight, sir; don't know whither; had not slept at all.' Alas! alas! I know not even whether you had got any breakfast. It did not strike me to question my *Hyæna* further on that subject, and it now strikes me you probably had none. Poor little soul! tough as wire, but rather heavy-laden. Well, I hope you are now asleep in your own safe, big, curtained old bed. In all ways you can now stretch yourself out.

I have had the loneliest day I can recollect in all my life, or about the very loneliest. I declined riding. My horse had need of rest, at any rate. The wind was howling and the dust flying, and on all my nerves lay dull embargo, only to be lifted by *hard* labour. I set out soon after one; walked over heaths, through thick woods, in solitary places, with a huge *sough* of the wind and a grey troublous sky for company, about three and a half hours; did not weary, did not much improve. Sate smoking once with a bush at my back, on a hill-side by the edge of a wood. Got home five minutes before five, and the punctual Dragon was there with the dinner you had ordered. After dinner I read for an hour, smoked, then sate down by the fire, and, waiting to ring for candle, fell into nightmare sleep till almost nine.

I look for you on Tuesday *early*. Nevertheless, if you would rather not, I have no doubt of getting some feasible enough dinner, &c., for indeed that poor woman seems to understand her work well enough; and the Dragon herself is all civility and sugary smiles, if that were of much advantage. For the rest, the dreariness of solitude—that, though disagreeable to bear, is understood to be of the nature of medicine to the mind at this juncture. No way of cleaning muddy water but by letting it settle.

However, I calculate you will come, and take the reins in hand for another stage. My poor little Protectress! Good night now finally.

T. C.

Such letters as this throw strange lights into Carlyle's domestic life, sad and infinitely touching. When he complains so often of the burdens that were laid upon him, one begins to understand what he meant. And yet, harassed and overloaded as he was, he could find leisure for acts of kindness to strangers who would not have intruded on him had they known of his anxieties. I had not yet settled in London; but I came up occasionally to read books in the Museum, &c. I called as often as I ventured in Cheyne Row, and was always made welcome there. But I was a mere outward acquaintance, and had no right to expect such a man as Carlyle to exert himself for me. I had, however, from the time when I became acquainted with his writings, looked on him as my own guide and master—so absolutely that I could have said: '*Malim errare cum Platone quam cum aliis bene sentire*'; or, in Goethe's words, which I often indeed did repeat to myself: '*Mit deinem Meister zu irren ist dein Gewinn.*' The practice of submission to the authority of one whom one recognises as greater than one's self

outweighs the chance of occasional mistake. If I wrote anything, I fancied myself writing it to him, reflecting at each word on what he would think of it, as a check on affectations. I was busy then on the first volume of my 'History of England.' I had set the first two chapters in print that I might take counsel with friends upon them. I sent a copy to Carlyle, which must have reached him about the time of this Addiscombe sojourn, and it came back to me with pencil criticisms which, though not wanting in severity, consoled me for the censures which fell so heavily on those chapters when the book was published.

Autumn passed on, and winter and spring, and Carlyle was still at his desk. At Christmas there was another visit to the Grange. 'Company at first aristocratic and select: Lord Lansdowne and Robert Lowe; then miscellaneous shifting, chiefly of the scientific kind,' and moderately interesting. But his stay was short, and he was absorbed again at his work in the garret room. With Mrs. Carlyle, unfortunately, it was a period of ill-health, loneliness, and dispiritment. At the end of 1855 she had commenced the diary, from which her husband first learnt, after her death, how miserable she had been, and learnt also that he himself had been in part the cause. It was continued on into the next spring and summer, in the same sad, stoically indignant tone; the consummation of ten years of resentment at an intimacy which, under happier circumstances, should have been equally a delight to herself, yet was ill-managed by all parties concerned, and steeped in gall and bitterness her own married life. It is impossible to suppose that Lady Ashburton was not

aware of Mrs. Carlyle's feelings towards her. She had a right perhaps to think them ridiculous, but for Carlyle's own sake she ought to have been careful how she behaved to her. If nine-tenths of Mrs. Carlyle's injuries were imaginary, if her proud and sensitive disposition saw affronts where there had been only a great lady's negligence, there was a real something of which she had a right to complain; only her husband's want of perception in such matters could have prevented him from seeing how unfit it was that she should have to go and come at Lady Ashburton's bidding, under fear of her husband's displeasure. A small incident in the summer of 1856, though a mere trifle in itself, may serve as an illustration of what she had to undergo. The Carlyles were going for a holiday to Scotland. Lady Ashburton was going also. She had engaged a palatial carriage, which had been made for the Queen and her suite, and she proposed to take the Carlyles down with her. The carriage consisted of a spacious saloon, to which, communicating with it, an ordinary compartment with the usual six seats in it was attached. Lady Ashburton occupied the saloon alone. Mrs. Carlyle, though in bad health and needing rest as much as Lady A., was placed in the compartment with her husband, the family doctor, and Lady A.'s maid,[1] a position perfectly proper for her if she was a dependent, but in which no lady could have been placed whom Lady Ashburton regarded as her own equal in rank. It may be that Mrs. Carlyle chose to have it so herself. But Lady A. ought not to have allowed it, and Carlyle ought

[1] See *Reminiscences*, vol. ii. p. 245.

not to have allowed it, for it was a thing wrong in itself. One is not surprised to find that when Lady A. offered to take her home in the same way she refused to go. 'If there were any companionship in the matter,' she said bitterly, when Carlyle communicated Lady A.'s proposal, 'it would be different; or if you go back with the Ashburtons it will be different, as then I should be going as part of your luggage without self-responsibility.' Carlyle regarded the Ashburtons as 'great people,' to whom he was under obligations: who had been very good to him: and of whose *train* he in a sense formed a part. Mrs. Carlyle, with her proud, independent, Scotch republican spirit, imperfectly recognised these social distinctions. This it may be said was a trifle, and ought not to have been made much of. But there is no sign that Mrs. Carlyle did make much of what was but a small instance of her general lot. It happens to stand out by being mentioned incidentally. That is all. But enough has been said of this sad matter, which was now drawing near its end.

On reaching Scotland the party separated. Lady Ashburton went to the Highlands, where Carlyle was to follow in September. Mrs. Carlyle went to her cousins in Fife and he to Scotsbrig, which he had left last after his mother's funeral. All his family were delighted to see him once more amongst them. His brother James was waiting for him at the station. His sister-in-law had provided a long new *pipe* of the right Glasgow manufacture: he would smoke nothing else. His mother—she, alas! was not there: only the chair in which she had sate, now vacant.

But (as he said) there is no wisdom in yielding to such thoughts. It is on death that all life has been appointed to stand for its brief season, and none of us can escape the law. There is a certain solemn consolation which reconciles me to almost everything in the thought that I am myself fairly *old*; that all the confusions of life, whether of this colour or that, are soon about to sink into nothing, and only the soul of one's work, if one did any that had a soul, can be expected to survive.'

He had not come to Scotsbrig to be idle; he had his work with him, at which he toiled on steadily. He had expected his wife to join him there, but she showed no intention that way. He wrote to her regularly with his usual quiet affection. Her answers 'he found sombre and distrustful perhaps beyond need,' but kind and good; he 'begged her to know that in his own way none loved her so well as he, or felt that he had better cause to do so.' From Scotsbrig he moved to his sister's at the Gill, by Annan—happy among his own kindred, longing to be 'out of London, never to return,' and to spend the rest of his days in a scene where health of mind and body would not be impossible.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

The Gill: August 7, 1857.

I seem to be doing really excellently in regard to health. What a change (*mostly* for the better) has been brought about since I escaped from that Devil's oven with its dirts and noises. The disgusting *dearth* of London, the noise, unwholesomeness, dirt, and fret of one's whole existence there has often forced itself upon me when I look at this frugality and these results. If I had done with those books what more have I to do with that healthless, profitless, mad, and heavy-laden place? I will really put it to you once more to consider if it were not better we returned to poor

old Scotland, there to adjust ourselves a little, there to lay our bones, I care not much in what part. Annandale is very sad to me, and has no charm almost, except that Jamie would be here. It is certain we might live here in opulence, keep brougham, cow, minister's man, &c.), and give our poor selves and Nero a much wholesomer life were those printing enterprises once ended.

One spot Carlyle could not fail to visit—the Ecclefechan kirkyard:—

On Sunday (he said) I made a visit *whither* you can guess; had a few sacred moments there, standing with bared head out of sight. Surely there is not any mystery more divine than this unspeakably sad and holy one. There they were all lying in peace, having well finished their fight. 'Very bonny; very bonny,' as poor old Mary Mills said in another case.[1]

He continued well in health. Never in his life had he more the kind of chance he was always crying out for—'perfect kindness and nearly perfect solitude, the freshest of air, wholesomest of food, riding horse, and every essential provided—m—m—better than he—m—deserved.'[2] 'He had got some work done,' 'made a real impression on the papers he had brought with him.' Why could not he stay where he was when he was well off? Why need he have supposed that he must start away to the Ashburtons at Loch Luichart? Harvest, he said, was coming on in Annandale, when guests were inconvenient. Any way, it was a fresh drop of acid to his wife, who took no notice to him of the letter in which he informed her of his purpose, but wrote to another of the family.

[1] Of the grave of Mrs. Welsh.

[2] Coleridge; with the humming pronunciation.

You say in your letters to —— (he said) you wait for Mr. C.'s plans. Alas! Mr. C. has no plans you do not long since know of. He means to be back at Chelsea at his work about the end of September; would be well content to pass the whole time on these present terms, here and about here; has no theory of future movements as visits, except that one to the Inverness regions, which he will avoid if he can. That is the whole truth.

It appeared he could not avoid it, for he went to Loch Luichart, stayed a fortnight there, and did not enjoy himself, if we may judge from this specimen of his experiences :—

Kinloch Luichart: September 23.

Very cold; no fire, or none but an imaginary one, can be permitted in the drawing-room. Her ladyship is in worse humour than usual; is capable of being driven to extremities by your setting up a peat from its flat posture: so I have learned altogether to abstain. Nothing earthly to be *done*, nothing good to be read, to be said, or thought. This is not a luxurious kind of life for a poor wayfaring individual. My commonest resource is this: to walk out from six to ten miles, ducking under bushes from the showers; return utterly tired, put on dressing-gown, cape, plaid, &c., and lie down on one's bed under all the woollen stuff one can gather, with hat laid on cheek to keep out the light. I usually get to a kind of warm half-sleep, and last till dinner time not so ill off.

His wife was still silent for some days, and when she wrote it was to be satirical at his situation, and to refuse, in sharper tones than he liked, to return under Lady A.'s convoy to London.

The second part of your letter (he replied) is far less pleasant to me than the first. It is wholly grounded on misknowledge, or in deep ignorance of the circumstances, and deserves for answer no further details, credible or in-

credible, about these Highland matters till we meet. There is for you—but you are a good body, too! What you say about the regal vehicle to London from Edinburgh is mostly right, and I have settled it must be the way you write. Lady A., whose kind intentions and endeavours cannot be questioned, seems particularly anxious we should both profit by this Edinburgh conveyance. My answer is 'No; with thanks.' What pleasure or profit *they* would get by it is not apparent; but any way, we have to stand by the above decision, which I see you think the best for various reasons.'

An unpleasant state of things! But there is one remedy for all evils. The occasion of the 'rifts' in Carlyle's life was to be removed for ever in the ensuing spring.

Journal.

May 6, 1857.—Monday, May 4, at Paris, died Lady Ashburton, a great and irreparable sorrow to me, yet with some beautiful consolations in it too; a thing that fills all my mind since yesterday afternoon that Milnes came to me with the sad news, which I had never once anticipated, though warned sometimes vaguely to do so. 'God sanctify my sorrow,' as the old pious phrase went. To her I believe it is a great gain; and the exit has in it much of noble beauty as well as pure sadness worthy of such a woman. Adieu! adieu! Her work—call it her grand and noble endurance of want of work—is all done!

He was present at the funeral, at Lord Ashburton's particular entreaty. It seemed like taking leave of the most precious possession which had belonged to him in the world. A few days after, the 23rd of May, he writes to his brother John:—

I got a great blow by that death you alluded to, which was totally unexpected to me; and the thought of it widening ever more, as I think further of it, is likely to be a

heaviness of heart to me for a long time coming. I have indeed lost such a friend as I never had, nor am again in the least likelihood to have, in this *stranger* world; a magnanimous and beautiful soul which had furnished the English earth and made it homelike to me in many ways is not now here. Not since our mother's death has there been to me anything resembling it.

Many years later, on casually hearing some one describe Lady A. in a way that interested him, he notes :—

A sketch true in every feature I perceived, as painted on the mind of Mrs. L——; nor was that a character quite simple to read. On the contrary, since Lady Harriet died I have never heard another that did so read it. Very strange to me. A *tragic* Lady Harriet, deeply though she veiled herself in smiles, in light, gay humour and drawing-room wit, which she had much at command. Essentially a most veracious soul too. Noble and gifted by nature, had Fortune but granted any real career. She was the greatest lady of rank I ever saw, with the soul of a princess and captainess had there been any career possible to her but that fashionable one.

After this the days went on with sombre uniformity, Mrs. Carlyle still feeble and growing indeed yearly weaker, Carlyle toiling on in his 'mud element,' driving his way through it, hardly seeing anyone, and riding for three hours every afternoon. He had called his horse Fritz. 'He was a very clever fellow,' he said of him to me, 'was much attached to me, and understood my ways. He caught sight in Palace Yard of King Richard's horse, clearly perceived that it was a horse, and was greatly interested in it.' 'Ah, Fritz,' he once apostrophised him, 'you don't know all your good fortune. You were well brought up to know and do your duty. No-

body ever told you any lies about some one else that had done it for you.' He wrote few letters, his mother no longer living to claim his time. It was only on occasion that he gave anyone a lengthened account of himself. This is to his brother John :—

Chelsea: June 11, 1857.

Probably I am rather better in health; the industrious riding on this excellent horse sometimes seems to myself to be slowly telling on me; but I am habitually in sombre, mournful mood, conscious of great weakness, a defeated kind of creature, with a right good load of sorrow hanging on me, and no goal that looks very glorious to aim towards now within sight. All my days and hours go to that sad task of mine. At it I keep weakly grubbing and puddling, weakly but steadily; try to make daily some little way as now almost the one thing useful. I refuse all invitations whatsoever for several reasons, and may be defined as a mute solitary being at present, comparable to an owl on the housetop in several respects. The truth is, I had enough before, and I have had privately a great loss and sorrow lately as it were of the one genuine friend I had acquired in these parts, whose nobleness was more precious to me than I knew; a loss not in any measure to be repaired in the world henceforth. That of old Johnson, common to old men in this world, often comes into my head. 'Been delayed till most of those whom I wished to please are sunk into the grave, and success and failure are empty sounds; I therefore dismiss it with frigid indifference;' but will do the best I can all the same. In fact, I do make a little way, and shall perhaps live to see the thing honestly done after all. Jane is decidedly better; gets out daily, &c., but is still as weak as possible; and though we have the perfection of weather, warm, yet never sultry, the poor mistress does not yet get even into her old strength for walking or the like. She went out to East Hampstead, Marquis of Downshire's people, beyond Windsor, and got so much good of her three days there I have been desirous she

could get to Scotland or somewhither for a couple of months, and she did seem to have some such intention. Sunny Bank[1] the place; but that has misgone, I fear. Meanwhile, she is very busy ornamenting the garden, poor little soul; has two China seats, speculates even upon an awning, or quasi-tent, against the blazes of July that are coming, which, you see, are good signs. Poor Douglas Jerrold, we hear incidentally this morning, is dead; an 'acrid philanthropist,' last of the 'London wits.' I hope the last. A man not extremely valuable in my sight; but an honest creature withal; and he has bade us Adieu for ever!

The 'Frederick' work did not grow more easy. The story, as it expanded, became the history of contemporary Europe, and even of the world, while Carlyle, like a genuine craftsman as he was, never shirked a difficulty, never threw a false skin over hollow places, or wrote a sentence the truth of which he had not sifted. One day he described himself as 'busy drawing water for many hours from the deep Brandenburg well,' and realising nothing 'but a coil of wet rope.' Still progress was made in July of this year 1857. The opening chapters were getting into print. He did not himself stir from London. The weather indoors had grown calmer after the occasion of difference was gone, and the gentle companionship of early days, never voluntarily impaired on his part, had partially returned. But change was necessary for her health. Her friends at Sunny Bank were really eager to have her, and he was glad to send her off. He himself travelled generally third class on railway journeys. She, weak though she was, insisted on going second. Carlyle saw her into the train. She had a wretched journey,

[1] Haddington.

and his first letter, after hearing of her misfortunes, was as tender as a lover's:—

To Jane Welsh Carlyle, Sunny Bank.

Chelsea: July 9, 1857.

Oh, what a passage! My poor little Goody Goody, Oh, dear! oh, dear! I was miserable all the way home to leave you in such a hole, the rather as I noticed, just when you were rolling off, one of the first-class carriages behind you with not a soul in it. You shall go no more into any wretched saving of that kind, never more while we have money at all. Remember that. I consoled myself with thinking most of your neighbours would go out in the Fen country and leave you with at least room and air. But it has been far otherwise. Good heavens! all the windows closed! Tobacco and the other stew all night! My heart is sore for my poor weak woman. Never again: should I sell my shirt to buy you a better place. Lie still and be quiet; only saunter out into the garden, into the balmy, natal air, and kind though sad old memories. We are doing well enough here. By God's favour—of which we have had much surely, though in stern forms—I will get rid of this deplorable task in a not disgraceful manner. *Then* for the rest of our life we will be more to one another than ever we were, if it please Heaven.

I have looked at the birds daily;[1] all right; and daily bestowed a bunch of chickweed on the poor wretches, who sing gratefully in return. Nero ran with me through the Brompton solitudes last night, merry as a maltman. Always on coming home he trips up to your room till I call him back. I wish he would give it over, for it makes me *wae*. I have been mainly under the awning all day, and got my sheets—three of them—corrected. God keep thee ever, dearest; whom else have I in the world? Be good, be quiet, and write.

T. CARLYLE.

[1] Mrs. Carlyle's canaries.

The prohibition against 'presents' had not been rescinded.

This is your birthday (he wrote on July 14). God grant us only many of them. I think now and then I could dispense with all other blessings. Our years have been well laden with sorrows, a quite sufficient *ballast* allowed us; but while we are together here there is always a world left. I am not to send you any gifts other than this scrap of paper; but I might give you California and not mean more than perhaps I do. And so may there be many years, and (as poor Irving used to say) the worst of them over.

Such halcyon weather could not continue without an occasional break. The air grew hot; proof-sheets were now and then troublesome. Photographers worried him to sit for their gallery of illustrious men, offering to send their artist to Chelsea for the purpose. The 'incomparable artist' was forbidden to come near the place. Sleep was irregular; solitude was trying.

I do pretty well, considering (he said after a fortnight of it). All I complain of is gloom, and I do not know how I should get well rid of that at present even if *I had you* to throw some portion of it upon! Tea is the gloomiest of all my meals. No Goody there! I am thankful even to Nero for reminding me of you.

At last there came interruption of work, from the need of revising the 'Latter-day Pamphlets' for a new edition. He was not well, and there came one of the old cross fits, and even Nero himself fell out of favour.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Chelsea: July 26, 1857.

To confess truth, I have had for about a week past a fit of villanous headaches, feverishness, &c., which I at first

attributed to oxtail soup, but now discover to be cold caught sitting in the sweep of the wind under the awning. I have been at proofs again all day. I am getting on slow, like an old spavined horse, but never giving in. The gloom of my soul is perfect at times, for I have feverish headaches, and *no* human company, or absolutely none that is *not* ugly to me. One hope remains—that of working out of this sad element, getting my book done, and quitting London, I often think, or as good as quitting it, for the sake of fresh air and dairy produce in abundance. Nero is already grunting for a sally out. He lost me yesternight, the intolerable messin that he is. I was hurrying home from a long walk, full of reflections not pleasant. At the bottom of Cadogan Place eleven o'clock struck: time to hurry home for porridge. But the vermin was wanting; no whistle would bring him. I had to go back as far as Wilton Crescent. There the miserable quadruped appeared, and I nearly bullied the life out of him. He licked my milk-dish at home with the 'same relish.' On the whole, however, he is a real nuisance and absurdity in this house.

The relapse happily did not last. The cold, or whatever it was, departed, and the gloom retired. The canaries had their chickweed, 'and said "Thank you kindly" as plain as could be sung.' Friends ceased to be ugly again, and Nero ceased to be a nuisance. 'Farie,' he said, 'rode with me yesternight. Poor Farie; very honest, gentlemanlike, friendly, more like a human creature than anybody I see at present.' 'Nero came into the garden and stationed himself on the warm flags to inquire about dinner.' His wife's comfort, he knew, would depend on the accounts which he sent about himself, and he made the best that he could of everything. She was paying visits which were not all pleasant. He was eager for every detail.

I am glad, he said, you make your bits of complaints freely to me; if not to me, to whom else now alive on the earth? Oh! never distrust me, as the devil sometimes tempts your poor heart to do. I know you for an honest soul, far too sharp-tempered, but *true* to the bone; and if I ever am or was unkind to you, God knows it was very far against my purpose. Do not distrust me. Tell me everything, and do not mind how weak you are before me. I know your strength and your weakness pretty well by this time. Poor little Goody! Sha'n't I be glad to see you back again? Yes; for a considerable number of reasons.

For more reasons than one, but for one especially. Carlyle's costume was always peculiar: so peculiar, thanks to his Ecclefechan tailor, that it was past being anxious about. Who that knew Carlyle would care what clothes he chose to wear? But there were degrees even in these singular articles.

I perceive, he said, you will have to set earnestly about getting me some wearing apparel when you come home. I have fallen quite shameful. I shall be naked altogether if you don't mind. Think of riding most of the summer with the aristocracy of the country, whenever I went into Hyde Park, in a duffle jacket which literally was part of an old dressing-gown a year gone. Is the like on record?

The sense that 'Frederick' was actually getting itself executed had tended wonderfully to soothe down the irritated humours. Even a night made sleepless by the heat of the weather had its compensations. On August 5 he wrote:—

Sunday I started broad awake at 3 a.m., went downstairs, out, smoked a cigar on a stool: have not seen so lovely, sad, and grand a summer weather scene for twenty years back. Trees stood all as if cast in bronze, not an aspen leaf stirring; sky was a silver mirror, getting yellowish to the north-east;

and only one big star, star of the morning, visible in the increasing light. This is a very grand place, this world, too. It did me no ill. Enough!

The world was well; all was well; for his own writing even was turning out better than he expected, though his opinion of it varied from day to day.

The worst is, he said, there is not the heart of a jay piat in me, to use Jamie's phrase.. I want, above all, a light mood of spirits to gallop through such topics; and, alas! where is that to come from? We must just do without it. I am well aware mourning and kicking at the pricks is not the way to mend matters.

The news of the Sepoy rebellion coming in this summer of course affected Carlyle, more, however, with sorrow than surprise. 'Tongue cannot speak,' he wrote, 'the horrors that were done on the English by those mutinous hyænas. Allow hyænas to mutiny and strange things will follow.' But he had long thought that 'many British interests besides India were on a baddish road.' The best that *he* could do was to get on with his own work, and not permit his attention to be drawn from it. Mrs. Carlyle greatly approved of the opening of 'Frederick.' She recognised at once the superiority of it to any other work that he had done, and she told him so. He was greatly delighted; he called her remarks the only bit of human criticism which he had heard from anyone.

It would be worth while to write books, he said, if mankind would read them as you do. From the first discovery of me you have predicted good in a confident manner; all the *same* whether the world were singing chorus, or no part of the world dreaming of such a thing, but of much the reverse.

He was essentially peaceable the whole time of her absence ; a flash might come now and then, but of summer sheet-lightning, which meant no harm. Even distant cocks and wandering organ-grinders got nothing but a passing anathema.

I am better to-day, he wrote on September 1, after he had been for two months alone. I hope you do not mind transient grumbling, knowing the nature of the beast by this time. Yellow scoundrels [the organ boys], though I speak of them so often, really are not troublesome; very many days they do not come at all, and if I were always tolerably well I should care little about them. A young lady, very tempestuous on the piano at one of those open back windows, really does me no ill almost ; nor does your friend with the accordion. He rather tickles me, like a nigger song ; such an enthusiasm is in him about nothing at all ; and when he plays 'Ye banks and braes,' I almost like him. Never mind me and my grumblings.

A few days after this she came home to him, and 'there was joy in Nero and the canaries, and in creatures more important.' Work went on without interruption. Fritz gave increasing satisfaction, taking better care of his rider than his rider could have taken of himself, and showing fresh signs of the excellence of his education. Not only was the moral part of him what it should be, but he had escaped the special snare of London life. 'He had not been brought up to think that the first duty of a horse was to say something witty.' The riding was late in the afternoon, and lasted long after dusk, along the suburban roads, amidst the glare of the red and green railway lamps at the bridges, and the shrieks and roars of the passing trains ; Fritz

never stumbling or starting, or showing the least sign of alarm.

The Scotch do not observe times and seasons, and Christmas in London to so true a Scot as Carlyle was a periodic nuisance. The printers suspended work, and proof-sheets hung fire. English holidays might have been beautiful things in old days, in country manors and farms; but in modern Chelsea they meant husbands staggering about the streets, and their miserable wives trying to drag them home before the last of the wages was spent on beer and gin.

All mortals [Carlyle wrote on December 28] are tumbling about in a state of drunken saturnalia, delirium, or quasi-delirium, according to their several sorts; a very strange method of thanking God for sending them a Redeemer; a set singularly worth 'redeeming,' too, you would say. I spent Christmas and the two days following in grim contention all day each time with the most refractory set of proof-sheets I expect in this work; the sternly sad remembrance of another Christmas [when his mother died] present to me also at all moments, which made a strange combination, peculiarly tragic when I had time to see it from the distance, like a man set to whittle cherry-stones and toy boxes in the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

Indoors, happily, the old affectionate days had come back—the old tone, the old confidences. It had really been as he had said in the summer, 'They were more to one another than they had ever been.' But Mrs. Carlyle suffered more than she had yet done from the winter cold, and a shadow of another kind now darkened the prospect. He had gone for three or four days to the now solitary Grange, at Lord Ashburton's earnest entreaty. Mrs. Carlyle was to have gone with him, but could not venture. He had been

most unwilling to leave her, but she insisted that he must.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: January 22, 1858.

Happily, my poor Jane is somewhat better. She had a little improved on Friday or Saturday, which made her urge the shocking unpoliteness of breaking an express promise, and despatch *me* at the eleventh hour. She professed to be still further improved when I came home, and, in fact, does sleep perceptibly better, though still very ill, and eats also a little better; though her cough, I perceive, is rather worse than before; and, in fact, she is weak and heavy-laden to a degree, and nothing but an invincible spirit could keep her up at all. It was the first day of the *thaw* when she discovered her cold, but I doubt not it had been getting ready in the cold days before; indeed, there were some wretched operatives here, busy upon the grate and its back and its tiles down below, with whom she had a great deal of trouble and vexation. They, I think, had mainly done it. I had, at any rate, a considerable notion to kick their lime-kits and them completely out of the house, but abstained from interfering at all, lest explosion should arise. Poor little soul! I have seldom seen anybody weaker, hardly ever anybody keeping *on foot* on weaker terms. But if she could only continue to have half sleep instead of only a fourth or even lower proportion, I should expect her to be able to get out again on good days, and so to recover soon anything she has lost *lately*. She has a particular pain about a handbreadth below the heart, rather sore to the touch—on pressure not sore at all, if not stirred, nor seemingly connected with coughing otherwise than by the mere *stir* produced. This is now some three weeks old, and vexes her somewhat. T. yesterday—judicious, kind man!—assured her *he* knew that, and it was an inflammation of the pleura just getting under way. If you can form any guess about it by this description, you may tell me. Affectionate regards to all.—Yours ever, T. CARLYLE.

House worries, with servants, &c., did not improve Mrs. Carlyle. Fritz had been left at the Grange. Carlyle, driven to his feet again, had lost his own chief comfort, and 'Frederick' had to be continued in more indifferent spirits. In the spring he writes to John again :—

Chelsea: March 22, 1858.

I am not worth seeing, nor is anybody much worth being seen by me in my present mood and predicament. I never was so solitary intrinsically. I refuse all invitations, and, except meeting people in the street, have next to no communication with my external fellow-creatures. I walk with difficulty long snatches, nothing but Nero attending me. I begin to find I must have my horse back again one of these days. My poor inner man reminds me that such will be my duty. I am sorry to report that since yesterday my poor Jane has caught new cold, and is flung down again, worse, probably, than before. She had never sunk so weak this year, and we hoped when the singularly good weather came it was all over. But within this day or two there has been a change of temperature, and this is where we are. 'No sleep at all' last night; nothing but the sofa and silence for my poor partner. We are changing our servant too; but how the new one (will answer)—a Scotch Inverness subject of promising *Gemüth*, but inexperienced in house-work—is somewhat of a problem. Few people that I have seen suffer their allotment in this world in a handsomer manner. I still hope this relapse will not last long.

To the Same.

April 15.

Our weather has suddenly got warm. Jane is now out, poor little soul. She would have been joyful, and on the road to *well* again, had it not been for that devil's brood of house servants. Anne went away a fortnight ago—no further good to be had of Anne. *Better* that she should go. Then came the usual muster and choice for poor Missus—great

fash, fidget, and at last a simple-looking Scotch lass preferred, who did not *know* her *work*, but whose physiognomy pleased hugely in the proper quarter. Much new *fash* in consequence for the two weeks gone—patient teaching of the simpleton, animated by hope of honesty, veracity, affectionate mind, &c., &c., the whole of which fell upon poor Jane ; for I had nothing to do in it except hold my peace, and rejoice in such prospects of all the virtues in a simple form. Night before last the poor Dame did not sleep, seemed sad too. On pressing into her I found the simpleton of virtues had broken into bottomless *lying*, 'drinking of cream on the road upstairs,' &c., and that, in short, it was hopeless. And while we yet spoke of it, a poor charwoman, used to the house, knocked at the room door, and entered with the sudden news that our simpleton was off, bag and baggage, plus a sovereign that had just been advanced her. Gone, ten p.m., and had left the pass key with the said charwoman.

My poor little sick partner. I declare it is heart-breaking for her sake, *disgusting*, otherwise, to a high degree, and *dirtier* for the mind than even brushing of boots oneself would be for the body. But our Dame is not to be beaten quite ; has already improvised a new arrangement—unhappily no sleep *almost* yet, and we must help her all we can.

In spite of anxieties and 'sordid miseries,' the two volumes of 'Frederick' meanwhile drew to completion. Carlyle (for him) was amazingly patient, evidently for his wife's sake having laid strong constraint on himself. His complaints, when he did complain, were of a human reasonable kind. Neuberg was most assiduous, and another young intelligent admirer—Mr. Larkin,[1] who lived next door to him—had volunteered his services, which were most gratefully recognised. 'My excellent helper,' he calls Mr. Larkin, 'in these printing enterprises, makes maps, indexes, &c., &c.,

[1] *Letters and Memorials*, vol. ii. p. 362.

makes everything ; in fact, one of the best men I have almost ever seen, and a very indispensable blessing to me.' Much went against him—or so he thought.

April 15.

Nothing (he said), will ever reconcile me to these miserable iron pens. Often in writing the beautiful book now on hand I remind myself of the old Spaniard who had to do his on leather with a dagger,[1] and, in fact, I detest writing more and more, and expect fairly to end it if I can ever finish this—but all friends be soft with me, for I declare myself hard bested in the present season.

By the first of May the printers had their last 'copy.' By the end of May all was in type. In the second week in June the first instalment of the work on which he had been so busy toiling was complete and off his hands, waiting to be published in the autumn. For six years he had been labouring over it. In 1851 he had begun seriously to think about the subject. In 1852 he made his tour to Berlin and the battle-fields. Ever since he had lain as in eclipse, withdrawn from all society save that of his most intimate friends. The effort had been enormous. He was sixty-three years old, and the furnace could be no longer heated to its old temperature. Yet he had thrown into the task all the strength he had left ; and now, although the final verdict has long been pronounced on this book, in Germany especially, where the merits of it can be best appreciated, I must say a very few words myself about it, and on Carlyle's historical method generally.

History is the account of the actions of men ; and in 'actions' are comprehended the thoughts, opinions, motives, impulses of the actors and of the circum-

[1] The *Araucana*, by Alonzo de Ercilla.

stances in which their work was executed. The actions without the motives are nothing, for they may be interpreted in many ways, and can only be understood in their causes. If 'Hamlet' or 'Lear' was exact to outward fact—were they and their fellow-actors on the stage exactly such as Shakespeare describes them, and if they did the acts which he assigns to them, that was perfect history; and what we call history is only valuable as it approaches to that pattern. To say that the characters of men cannot be thus completely known, that their inner nature is beyond our reach, that the dramatic portraiture of things is only possible to poetry, is to say that history ought not to be written, for the inner nature of the persons of whom it speaks is the essential thing about them; and, in fact, the historian assumes that he does know it, for his work without it is pointless and colourless. And yet to penetrate really into the hearts and souls of men, to give each his due, to represent him as he appeared at his best, to himself and not to his enemies, to sympathize in the collision of principles with each party in turn; to feel as they felt, to think as they thought, and to reproduce the various beliefs, the acquirements, the intellectual atmosphere of another age, is a task which requires gifts as great or greater than those of the greatest dramatists; for all is required which is required of the dramatist, with the obligation to truth of ascertained fact besides. It is for this reason that historical works of the highest order are so scanty. The faculty itself, the imaginative and reproductive insight, is among the rarest of human qualities. The moral determination to use it for purposes of truth only is rarer still—nay, it is but

in particular ages of the world that such work can be produced at all. The historians of genius themselves, too, are creatures of their own time, and it is only at periods when men of intellect have 'swallowed formulas,' when conventional and established ways of thinking have ceased to satisfy, that, if they are serious and conscientious, they are able 'to sympathize with opposite sides.'

It is said that history is not of individuals; that the proper concern of it is with broad masses of facts, with tendencies which can be analysed into laws, with the evolution of humanity in general. Be it so—but a science can make progress only when the facts are completely ascertained; and before any facts of human life are available for philosophy we must have those facts exactly as they were. You must have Hamlet before you can have a theory of Hamlet, and it is to be observed that the more completely we know the truth of any incident, or group of incidents, the less it lends itself to theory. We have our religious historians, our constitutional historians, our philosophical historians; and they tell their stories each in their own way, to point conclusions which they have begun by assuming—but the conclusion seems plausible only because they know their case imperfectly, or because they state their case imperfectly. The writers of books are Protestant or Catholic, religious or atheistic, despotic or Liberal; but nature is neither one nor the other, but all in turn. Nature is not a partisan, but out of her ample treasure-house she produces children in infinite variety, of which she is equally the mother, and disowns none of them; and when, as in Shakespeare, nature is represented truly,

the impressions left upon the mind do not adjust themselves to any philosophical system. The story of Hamlet in Saxo-Grammaticus might suggest excellent commonplace lessons on the danger of superstition, or the evils of uncertainty in the law of succession to the crown, or the absurdity of monarchical government when the crown can be the prize of murder. But reflections of this kind would suggest themselves only where the story was told imperfectly, and because it was told imperfectly. If Shakespeare's 'Hamlet' be the true version of that Denmark catastrophe, the mind passes from commonplace moralising to the tragedy of humanity itself. And it is certain that if the thing did not occur as it stands in the play, yet it did occur in some similar way, and that the truth, if we knew it, would be equally affecting—equally unwilling to submit to any representation except the undoctrinal and dramatic.

What I mean is this, that whether the history of humanity can be treated philosophically or not: whether any evolutionary law of progress can be traced in it or not; the facts must be delineated first with the clearness and fulness which we demand in an epic poem or a tragedy. We must have the real thing before we can have a science of a thing. When that is given, those who like it may have their philosophy of history, though probably they will care less about it; just as wise men do not ask for theories of Hamlet, but are satisfied with Hamlet himself. But until the real thing *is* given, philosophical history is but an idle plaything to entertain grown children with.

And this was Carlyle's special gift—to bring dead things and dead people actually back to life; to make

the past once more the present, and to show us men and women playing their parts on the mortal stage as real flesh-and-blood human creatures, with every feature which he ascribes to them authenticated, not the most trifling incident invented, and yet as a result with figures as completely alive as Shakespeare's own. Very few writers have possessed this double gift of accuracy and representative power. I could mention only two, Thucydides and Tacitus; and Carlyle's power as an artist is greater than either of theirs. Lockhart said, when he read 'Past and Present,' that, except Scott, in this particular function no one equalled Carlyle. I would go farther, and say that no writer in any age had equalled him. Dramatists, novelists have drawn characters with similar vividness, but it is the inimitable distinction of Carlyle to have painted actual persons with as much life in them as novelists have given to their own inventions, to which they might ascribe what traits they pleased. He worked in fetters—in the fetters of fact; yet, in this life of Frederick, the king himself, his father, his sister, his generals, his friends, Voltaire, and a hundred others, all the chief figures, large and small, of the eighteenth century, pass upon the stage once more, as breathing and moving men and women, and yet fixed and made visible eternally by the genius which has summoned them from their graves. A fine critic once said to me that Carlyle's Friedrich Wilhelm was as peculiar and original as Sterne's Walter Shandy; certainly as distinct a personality as exists in English fiction. It was no less an exact copy of the original Friedrich Wilhelm—his real self, discerned and reproduced by the insight of a nature which had

much in common with him. Those bursts of passion, with wild words flying about, and sometimes worse than words, and the agonised revulsion, with the 'Oh, my Feekin! oh, my Feekin! whom have I in the world but thee?' must have sadly reminded Mrs. Carlyle of occasional episodes in Cheyne Row.

CHAPTER XXIV.

A.D. 1858. ÆT. 63.

Night in a railway train—Annandale—Meditations—A new wardrobe—Visit to Craigenputtock—Second tour in Germany—The Isle of Rügen — Putbus — Berlin—Silesia—Prag—Weimar—Aix—Frederick's battlefields and Carlyle's description of them—Return to England—Second marriage of Lord Ashburton.

No further progress could be made with 'Frederick' till there had been a second tour in Germany, which was to be effected, if possible, in the summer or autumn of this year, 1858. The immediate necessity, after the completion of the present volumes, was for rest. When the strain was taken off, Carlyle fell into a collapsed condition. Notwithstanding his good resolutions, he became slightly fretful and troublesome, having nothing immediate to do. He was somewhat out of health, and fancied himself worse than he was. Mrs. Carlyle had grown better with the warmer weather; he could venture to leave her, and he went off in the middle of June to his sister in Annandale.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

The Gill, Annan, June 24, 1858.

Well, my dear little Jeannie, here I am safe, with less suffering than I anticipated. Nothing went awry of all the

arrangements; not the smallest ill accident befell. My chief suffering was from dust. Foul air I overcame by addressing, at the very first pulling up of the *opposite* window, a forcible bit of familiar eloquence to the gentleman active; 'how would he like to have his neighbour's dirty *shirt* offered him to wear, which was a clean transaction in comparison?' so that they at least let me keep down my own window, and even kept down theirs, poor souls! in whole or in part, almost the whole night. We were five—mostly fat; but these arrangements secured air, though with a painful admixture of dust and engine smoke. Except myself, the poor souls (Glasgow bodies mostly) fell sound asleep in an hour or two, and word of speech to me there was none, though perfect good nature, mixed with apprehension, as I judged. About midnight I changed my waistcoat, and took out the supper provided me by my own poor considerate little Goody. It was an excellent device. Some winks of sleep I had, too, though the stoppage always woke me again. In fine, Carlisle, through a beautiful, bright, breezy morning, a little before six. Cigar there; hardly finished when we started again; and at seven the face of Austin, with a gig, met me at Cummertrees, and within half an hour more I was busy washing here, and about to fall upon breakfast in my old quarters. . . . I have had coffee of prime quality, been out strolling to smoke a pipe, and returned with my feet wet. This is all I have yet *done*, and I propose next to put on my dressing-gown, and fairly lie down in quest of a sleep. This will probably be gone before I awake again; but, indeed, what news can there well be in the interim from a man in his sleep. Oh, my dear, one Friendkin! (what other have I left really?) I was truly *wae* to leave thee yesternight; you did not go away either. I saw you, and held up my finger to you almost at the very last. Don't bother yourself in writing me a very long letter; a very short one, if it only tell me you begin to profit by being left alone, will be abundantly welcome. Adieu, dearest. I even think of Nero, the wretch! Ever yours, T. CARLYLE.

The next morning he gathered and sent her a sprig of heather.

I am perfectly alone, he said, nothing round me but the grey winds and the abyss of Time, Past, Present, and Future. A whole Sanhedrim, or loudly debating parliament, so to speak, of *reminiscences* and ghosts is assembled round me—sad, very sad of tone in the mind's ear, but not unprofitable either. A little *live* note to Goody will be a comfort to myself, and no displeasure to Nero and her over the tea to-morrow morn.'

He bethought himself that before he left London he had been more cross than he ought to have been, indeed both cross and perverse. It was 'the nature of the beast,' as he often said, and had to be put up with, like the wind and the rain. Mrs. Carlyle had imagined that she must have been in some fault herself, or that he thought so.

The one thing that I objected to in your note, he answered, was that of my being discontented with you, or having ever for an instant been. Depend upon it that is a *mistake*, once for all. I was indeed discontented with myself, with hot, fetid London, generally with all persons and things—and my stomach had struck work withal; but not discontented with poor you ever at all. Nay, to tell you the truth, your anger at me (grounded on that false basis) was itself sometimes a kind of comfort to me. I thought, 'Well, she has strength enough to be cross and ill-natured at me; she is not all softness and affection and weakness.'

At the Gill he could indulge his moods, bright or sombre, as he liked.

Here, he said, all goes without jolt; well *enough* we may define everything to be. I find the air decidedly wholesome to me. I do my sleeping, my eating, my walking, am

out all day, in the open air; regard myself as *put in hospital*, decidedly on favourable terms, and am certain to improve daily. One of my worst wants is clothes; my thin London dress does not suit this temperature, and positively I am too shabby for showing face on the roads at all.

Gloom, as usual, clung to him like a shadow.

I go on well, he continued; am very sad and solitary, ill in want of a horse. The evening walks in the grey howl of the winds, by the loneliest places I can find, are like walks in Hades. Yet there is something wholesome in them; something stern and grand, as if one had the Eternities for company, in defect of suitabler.

The Eternities, however fond he was of their company, left him time to think of other things. His wife's cousin, John Welsh, was ill. He at once insisted that the boy should go to Madeira, and should go at his own and his wife's expense. If thoughtful charity recommends men to the Higher Powers, none ever better deserved of them than Carlyle. But he thought nothing of such things. He was soon finding himself happy, in clear air and silence, with his sister, 'feeling only a wearied man, not a ghastly phantasm, haunted by demons, as he usually was in London.' His costume was his chief anxiety.

Oh you lucky Goody, to be out of all that, he said. Never did I see so despicably troublesome a problem—insoluble, too; the endless varieties being all of quack nature, and simply no good stuff for raiment to be had. I have come to discover that here, too, I must pay my tribute to the general insanity, take such clothes as are to be had, and deliver poor Jean and myself from further bother on the subject. Oh, my Goody! I am very wae and lonely here. Take care, take care of thy poor little self, for truly enough I have no other.

The next letters are very touching, almost tragic.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

The Gill: July 5, 1858.

I reckon myself improving in bodily health. As for the spiritual part, there is no improving of me. I live in a death's head, as Jean Paul says some woodpeckers do, finding it handier than otherwise, and there I think I shall mostly continue. I sleep tolerably well always. They are all as kind and attentive here as they can be. *Fractus bello, fessus annis.* I ought to think myself lucky in such a niche, and try to gather my wayward wanderings of thought, and compose myself a little, which I have not yet in the least done since I came hither. My best time is usually the evening; never saw such evenings for freshness, brightness—the west one champaign of polished silver, or silver gilt, as the sun goes down, and I get upon the wastes of the Priest-side, with no sound audible but that of tired geese extensively getting home to their quarters, and here and there a contemplative cuddy, giving utterance to the obscure feeling he has about this universe. I go five or six miles, striding along under the western twilight, and return home only because porridge ought not to be belated over much. I read considerably here, sit all day sometimes under the shelter of a comfortable hedge, pipe not far distant, and read Arrian. Oh, if I sent you all the thoughts—sad extremely some of them—which I have about you, they would fill much paper, and perhaps you would not believe in some of them. It grieves my heart to think of you weltering along in that unblessed London element, while there is a bright, wholesome summer rolling by.

July 8.

I am a prey to doleful considerations, and my solitary imagination has free field with me in the summer silence here. My poor little Jeannie! my poor, ever-true life-partner, hold up thy little heart. We have had a sore life pilgrimage together, much bad road, poor lodging, and bad weather, little like what I could have wished or dreamt for

my little woman. But we stood to it, too; and, if it please God, there are yet good years ahead of us, better and quieter much than the past have been now and then. There is no use in going on with such reflections and anticipations. No amount of paper would hold them all at this time, nor could any words, spoken or written, give credible account of them to thee. I am *wae* exceedingly, but not half so miserable as I have often been.

July 9.

I lay awake all last night, and never had I such a series of hours filled altogether with you. . . I was asleep for some moments, but woke again; was out, was in the bathing tub. It was not till about five that I got into 'comatose oblivion,' rather than sleep, which ended again towards eight. My poor suffering Jeannie was the theme of my thoughts. Nay, if I had not had that I should have found something else; but, in very truth, my soul was black with misery about you. Past, present, future, yielded no light point anywhere. Alas! and I had to say to myself, This is something like what she has suffered 700 times within the last two years. My poor, heavy-laden, brave, uncomplaining Jeannie! Oh, forgive me, forgive me for the much I have thoughtlessly done and omitted, far, far, at all times, from the poor purpose of my mind. And God help us! thee, poor suffering soul, and also me. God be with thee! what beneficent power we can call God in this world who is exorable to human prayer.

One of Mrs. Carlyle's letters had been delayed in the post. It arrived a day late. He writes:—

July 11.

If nothing had come that day too, I think I must have got into the rail myself to come up and see. It was a great relief from the blackest side of my imaginings, but also a sad fall from the brighter side I had been endeavouring to cherish for the day preceding. Oh me, oh me! I know not what has taken me; but ever since that sleepless night, though I am sleeping, &c., tolerably well again, there is nothing but wail and lamentation in the heart of all my

thoughts—a voice as of Rachel weeping for her children; and I cannot divest myself of the most pusillanimous strain of humour. All yesterday I remarked, in speaking to ——, if any tragic topic came in sight, I had a difficulty to keep from breaking down in my speech, and becoming inarticulate with emotion over it. It is as if the scales were falling from my eyes, and I were beginning to see in this, my solitude, things that touch me to the very quick. Oh, my little woman! what a suffering thou hast had, and how nobly borne! with a simplicity, a silence, courage, and patient heroism which are only now too evident to me. Three *waer* days I can hardly remember in my life; but they were not without worth either; very blessed some of the feelings, though many so sore and miserable. It is very good to be *left alone* with the truth sometimes, to hear with all its sternness what *it* will say to one.

All this was extremely morbid; but it was not an unnatural consequence of habitual want of self-restraint, coupled with tenderness of conscience when conscience was awake and could speak. It was likely enough that in those night-watches, *when the scales fell off*, accusing remembrances must have risen before him which were not agreeable to look into. With all his splendid gifts, moral and intellectual alike, Carlyle was like a wayward child—a child in wilfulness, a child in the intensity of remorse. His brother James provided him with a horse—a 'dromedary,' he called it, 'loyal, but extremely stupid'—to ride or drive about among the scenes of his early years. One day he went past Hoddam Hill, Repentance Tower, Ecclefechan churchyard, &c., beautiful, quiet, all of it, in the soft summer air, and yet he said, 'The valley of Jehoshaphat could not have been more stern and terribly impressive to him. He could

never forget that afternoon and evening, the old churchyard tree at Ecclefechan, the white headstones of which he caught a steady look. The deepest *de Profundis* was poor to the feeling in his heart.' The thought of his wife, ill and solitary in London, tortured him. Would she come to the Gill to be nursed? No one in the world loved her more dearly than his sister Mary. The daughters would wait on her, and be her servants. He would himself go away, that he might be no trouble to her. Amidst his sorrows the ridiculous lay close at hand. If he was to go to Germany, his clothes had to be seen to. An entire 'new wardrobe' was provided, 'dressing-gown, coats, trousers lying round him like a hay coil;' rather well-made too, after all, though 'the whole operation had been scandalous and disgusting, owing to the anarchy of things and shopkeepers in those parts.' He had been recommended to wear a leather belt for the future when he rode. His sisters did their best, but 'the problem became abstruse;' a saddler had to be called in from Dumfries, and there was adjusting and readjusting. Carlyle, sad and mournful, 'inexpressibly wearied,' impatient, irritated, declared himself disgusted with the 'problem,' and more disgusted with himself, 'when he witnessed his sister's industrious helpfulness, and his own unhelpable nature.'

Pardon me, he cried—pardon me, ye good souls! Oh, it is not that I am cruel or unthankful; but I am weary, weary, and it is difficult to get the galling harness from me, and the heavy burden off the back of an old wayworn animal, at this advanced stage. You never saw such sewing of *belts*, thrice over each of the two that were realized (and, in fact, they do seem to fit perfectly); not to speak of my unjust

impatience—most unjust—of my sulky despair. Poor, good sister! No wonder I was wae in walking into the cold, bright sunset after seeing her off. The silence before I returned in again—the wind having gone down—was intense; only one poor collie heard expressing his astonishment at it miles away.

The clothes and belt question being disposed of, he grew better—slept better. The *demons* came less often. A German Life of Charles XII. was a useful distraction.

Such a man! would not for the whole world have spoken or done any lie; valiant as a son of Adam ever was—strange to see upon a throne in this earth; the grand life blown out of him at last by a *canaille* of '*Nobility*,' so called.

A visit to Craigenputtock had become necessary. There was business to be attended to, the tenant to be seen and spoken with, &c. He rather dreaded this adventure, but it was not to be avoided. His brother James went with him.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

The Gill, August 6, 1858.

Yesterday the Craigenputtock expedition was achieved. Battering showers attended us from Iron Grey kirkyard to Sunday well, but no other misadventure at all; for as to famine, neither Jamie nor I could have eaten had the chance been offered us, as, indeed, it was by our loyal tenant and his wife. On the whole, the business was not at all so uncomfortable as I had anticipated, or, indeed, to be called miserable, at all, except for the memories it could not fail to awaken. From Stroquhan upwards there are slight improvements noticeable in one or two places, but essentially no marked change. The bleak moor road lay in plashes of recent rain from Carstammon onwards. Stumpy [some field] was in crop—very poor promise the oatmeal coming there;

and after two other gates by the side of the ragged woods grown sensibly bigger, and through our once 'pleasaunce,' which is grown a thicket of straggling trees, we got to the front door, where the poor old knocker, tolerably scoured still, gave me a pungent salutation. The house, trim and tight in all essential particulars, is now quite buried in woods; and even from the upper back windows you can see no moor, only distant mountain-tops, and, near by, leafy heads of trees. The tenant, who was in waiting by appointment, is a fine, tall, strapping fellow, six feet two or so, with cheerful sense, honesty, prompt mastery of his business looking out of every feature of him; wife, too, a good busy young mother. Our old dining-room is now the state apartment, bearing *her* likeness, as it once did quite another dame's, and grand truly for those parts: new-papered, in a flaming pattern, carpetted do., with tiny sideboard, &c. I recognised only the old grate and quasi-marble mantelpiece, little changed, and surely an achievement dear to me now. *Your* old paper is on the other two rooms, dim, like the fading memories. I looked with emotion upon my old *library closet*, and wished I could get thither again, to finish my 'Frederick' under fair chances. Except some small injuries about the window-sashes, &c., which are now on the road to repair, everything was tight and right there. A considerable young elm (natural son of the old high tree at the N.E. corner of the house, under which I have read Waverley Novels in summer holidays) has planted itself near the bare wall—our screen from the old peat-house, you recollect—and has got to be ten or twelve feet high under flourishing auspices. This I ordered to be respected and cherished towards a long future, &c.

Craigenputtock looks all very respectably; much wood to cut and clear away, the tenant evidently doing rather well in it. The poor woods have struggled up in spite of weather, tempest, and misfortune. Even Macadam's burnt plantation begins to come away, and the old trees left of it are tall and venerable beings. 'Nothing like Craigenputtock larch for toughness in all this country.' For most part, there are

again far too many trees. '300*l.* worth o' wud to cut away, and mair, and there is a market,' said a man skilled in such matters, whom I found mowing there and consulted. . . Is not this enough of Craigenputtock—Crag of the Gleds, as its name means? Enough, and to spare.

Germany was to come next, and to come immediately, before the days drew in. He shuddered at the recollection of the *Zwei ruhige Zimmer*, &c., in which he had suffered so much torture. But he felt that he must go, cost what it might. Some friend had proposed to take him in a yacht to the Mediterranean and land him at Trieste. Lord Ashburton more reasonably had offered him a cast in another yacht to the Baltic. But Carlyle chose to stand by the ordinary modes of conveyance. He sent for his passport, nailed a map of Germany to his wall, daily perused it, and sketched an outline of his route. M. Neuberg, who was at Leipzig, was written to, but it was doubtful whether he was attainable. A Mr. Foxton, a slight acquaintance, offered his companionship, and was conditionally accepted; and after one or two 'preliminary shivers' and 'shuddering recoils,' Carlyle screwed his courage to the sticking-point and, in spite of nerves and the rest of it, got through with the operation. The plan was to go by steam to Hamburg; whither next was not quite decided when an invitation came from Baron von Usedom and his English wife to visit them in the Isle of Rügen. It was out of the way; but Stralsund, Rügen, the Baltic, were themselves interesting. The Usedoms' letter was most warm, and Carlyle, who rather doubted Mr. Foxton's capabilities as courier, thought that this excursion might 'put him on his trial.' He

could be dismissed afterwards if found unsuitable. Much anxiety was given to poor Mr. Foxton. Neuberg held out hopes of joining, and Foxton in that case would not be wanted. But John Carlyle suggested that Neuberg and he would perhaps neutralize each other, like alkali and acid. On August 21 Carlyle went off to Edinburgh, whither poor Mr. Foxton had come, at great inconvenience to himself. He found his friend 'very talky, scratch o' plastery, but serviceable, assiduous, and good compared with nothing.' The evening of the same day they sailed from Leith.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Hamburg: August 24, 11 p.m.

Here I am safe enough since eight hours, after such a voyage for tumult and discomfort (now forgotten) as I have seldom made. The Leith people, innocent but ineffectual souls, forgot every promise they had made except that of sailing five hours after their time and landing us at last fifteen hours after ditto. We had baddish weather all Sunday, mediocre till this morning, and such a scrambling dog-kennel of a sickly life. However, the sail up the *Elbe* all this day was bright, sunny, and beautiful, and our history since—a fair prospect even of sleep being superadded—has been favourable in all points; so that thanks to Heaven are alone due from me in that matter. And thy little heart, poor woman, wherever this may find thee, may set itself at rest on my score. We have the finest airy hotel, cheap too, they say. My room is five stairs up, looking over mere roofs. We dined wholesomely. Neuberg had a man in wait—poor good soul after all!—to say that he was ready at any hour, &c. In short, except a storm of fine wind music spreading over the city and not yet concluded, there is a right fair share of comfort and good omens round me here on fair earth again. The music is excellently sweet; *pathetic* withal to the worn soul towards midnight; and I write to

my own little partner far away for to-morrow's post, till it cease. Again let us thank Heaven. Foxton, poor fellow, is very good; stands snubbing into silence; annihilates himself whenever I like, and is verily a gentleman in air and heart. Good for almost nothing in the way of *help*,[1] though prompt as possible. But along with Neuberg he will do extremely well.

August 25, 9 a.m.

We go off at noon towards Usedom and Rügen, Foxton stopping at Stralsund near by. There will we wait Neuberg's advance in safety, and can take a fine sea-bathe if we like, for Rügen is the German Isle of Wight.

Carzitz, Insel Rügen: August 27.

How glad I am to write to thee from here. Since yesterday my prospects and situation have miraculously mended, and at present I call myself a lucky kind of man. I am rid of Foxton quite *ad libitum*, free of scratching on the plaster. Have had again a sound good sleep, and am lodged in the prettiest strange place you ever saw, among people kind to me as possible. Am going to get my enterprise deliberately made feasible, and as a preliminary mean to have a bathe in the Baltic Sea as soon as this note and one to Neuberg is done.

Yesterday, about 11 a.m., after two rather sleepless and miserable nights on land, which with the three preceding at sea had reduced me to a bad pitch, I had, with poor, helpless but assiduous Foxton stepped out of the railway train at Rostock, biggish sea capital of Mecklenburg, and was hurrying along to get a place in the Stralsund diligence, with no prospect but eight hours of suffocation and a night to follow without sleep, when a lady, attended by her maid, addressed me with sunny voice and look, 'Was not I Mr. Carlyle?' 'I am the Frau von Usedom,' rejoined she on my answer, 'here to seek you, sixty-four miles from home, and you must go with me henceforth.' Hardly in my life had such a *manus e nubibus* been extended to me. I need not say how thrice gladly I accepted.

[1] I may as well say that both Mr. Foxton and Mr. Neuberg have been dead for several years.

I had, in fact, done with all my labour then, and was carried on henceforth like a mere child in arms, nothing to do or care for, but all conceivable accommodation gracefully provided me up hither to this pleasant Isle of the Sea, where I now am a considerably rested man. We posted forty-five miles, I sitting mainly on the box, smoking and gazing abroad. Foxton, whom after a while I put inside to do the talking, we dropped at Stralsund, 6 p.m., other side of the little strip of sea, and he is off to Berlin or whither he likes, and I need not recall him again except as *sour* to the *fat* of Neuberg, who is worth a million of him for helping me on and making no noise about it. Happy journey to poor Foxton!

After Stralsund and one little bit of sea steaming in one of the brightest autumn evenings, we had still almost twenty miles into the strange interior of the Rügen, a flat, bare, but cultivated place, with endless paths but no *roads*. Strange brick-red beehives of cottages, very exotic-looking; a very exotic scene altogether in the moonlight, and a voluble, incessantly explosive, demonstrative, but thoroughly good Madame von Usedom beside me. Most strange, almost as in a Mährchen. But we had four swift horses, a new, light carriage, and went spanking along roadless, and in fine I am here and have slept. The place is like nothing you ever saw, mediæval, semi-patriarchal, half a farmhouse, half a palace. The Herr, who is at Berlin, returns this night. Has made arrangements, &c. Oh, what arrangements! and even 'spoken of it to the Prince of Prussia.' What is also for practice definitely lucky, Neuberg's letter finds me this morning, and he will himself be in Berlin *to-morrow night*, there to wait. N. thinks in about two weeks after our meeting the thing might be got completed. Would it were so, and I home again out of these foreign elements good and bad. In a word, be at ease about *me*, and thank Heaven I have human room to sleep in again, am seeing strange things not quite worthless to me, and, in fact, am in a fair way. If I knew you were but well I think I could be almost happy here to-day in the silent sunshine on these remote

Scandinavian shores. The wind is singing and the sun sporting in the lindens, and I hear doves cooing. Windows up! Two rooms all to myself. Coo! coo!

Berlin: September 5.

Above a week since you heard of me! and I, unhappy that I am, have not heard from you one word.[1] Oh! may the like never happen between us again. May this be the last journey I take into foreign tumults and horrors, far away from all that I love and all that is really helpful to me. But to my narrative:—The Usedoms in Rügen were the kindest of hosts to me, and the place and circle had its interests and advantages; but alas! I fell unwell the day after writing to you. Bathed in the Baltic on the back of all my Hamburg and other adventures; caught cold; *had* already caught it, but developed it by the vile 'bathe.' Felt as if I were getting into a fever outright, and had to take decisive measures, though in a foreign house. That did prove effectual, but you can fancy what two or three days I had, the rather as they made me do the 'picturesque' all the time; and there was no end to the talk I had to carry on. The Herr von Usedom is a fine, substantial, intelligent, and good man. We really had a great deal of nice speech together, and did beautifully together; only that I was so weak and sickly, and except keeping me to the picturesque, he would not take almost any wise charge of my ulterior affairs. At length—Friday afternoon last—he did set out with me towards Berlin and practicalities. 'To stay over night at Putbus, the Richmond of Rügen, and then catch the steamer to Stettin, and thence by rail to Berlin next day.' We got to Putbus, doing picturesque by the way. A beautiful Putbus indeed! where I had such a night as should be long memorable to me: big loud hotel, sea-bathing, lodgers with their noises, including plenteous coach-horses under my window, followed by noises of cats, item of brood sows, and at two a.m. by the simultaneous explosion of two Cochin China cocks, who continued to play thenceforth, and left me what sleep you can fancy in such

[1] Her letters had gone to Dresden.

quarters. Never till the end of things may I visit Putbus again. However, next day's—yesterday's—steam voyage and rail was pleasantly successful, and at 10.30 p.m. I found the useful Neuberg, who had secured me my old apartment in the British Hotel, and here, thank God, I have got some sleep again and have washed my skin clean, and mean to be on the road towards Liegnitz and Breslau to-morrow. . . . Neuberg looks very ugly—is, in fact, ill in health. Foxton is here too; scratchy, though in a repentant condition. Enough! let us on, and let them do! Berlin is loud under my windows. A grey, close, hottish Sunday; but I will take care not to concern myself with it beyond the needful. To-morrow we are off: Liegnitz, Breslau, Prag, then Dresden; after which only two battlefields remain, and London is within a week. Neuberg is also going straight to London. You may compute that all the travelling *details*—washtubs, railways, money settlements, &c.—are fairly off my hands from this point. I have strength enough in me too. With the snatches of sleep fairly expectable, I conclude myself roadworthy for fourteen days. Then adieu! *Keil Kissen*, sloppy, greasy victual, all cold too, including especially the coffee and the tea. Adieu, Teutschland! Adieu, travelling altogether, and I will never leave my Goody any more. Oh! what a *Schatz* even I, poor I, possess in that quarter, the poorest, but also the richest in some respects, of all the sons of men.

I saw some prettyish antient Rügen gentlemen, item ladies, who regarded with curiosity the foreign monster Small thanks to them. N.B.—The Baltic Sea is not rightly salt at all—not so salt as Solway at half-tide, and one evening we rode across an arm of it. Insignificant sea!

Brieg, Lower Silesia: September 10, 1858.

We quitted Berlin under fair auspices Monday morning last, fortified with a general letter from the Prince's aide-de-camp to all Prussian officers whatsoever. But hitherto, owing to an immense review, which occupies everybody, it has done us less good than we expected. At Cüstrin a

benevolent major did attend us to the field of Zorndorf, and showed us everything. But in other places the review at Liegnitz has been fatal to help from such quarters. We have done pretty well without; have seen three other fields, and had adventures of a confused, not wholly unpleasant, character.

Our second place was Liegnitz itself, full of soldiers, oak garlands, coloured lamplets, and expectation of the Prince. We were on the battlefield, and could use our natural eyes, but for the rest had no other guidance worth other than contempt. Did well enough nevertheless, and got fairly out of Liegnitz to Breslau, which has been our head-quarters ever since. A dreadfully noisy place at night, out of which were excursions. Yesterday to Leuthen, the grandest of all the battles; to-day hither about fifty miles away to Molwitz, the first of Fritz's fights, from which we have just now returned. Sleep is the great difficulty here, but one does contrive some way. Occasionally, as at Cüstrin, one has a night 'which is rather exquisite.' But I lie down in the daytime—in fine, struggle through one way or the other. I do not think it is doing me much hurt, and it lasts only some ten days now. As to profit—well, there is a kind of comfort in doing what one intended. The people are a good, honest, modest set of beings; poorer classes, especially in the country, much happier than with us. Every kind of industry is on the improving hand; the land, mainly sandy, is far better tilled than I expected. And oh! the church steeples I have mounted up into, and the barbarous jargoning I have had, questioning ignorant mankind. Leuthen yesterday and Molwitz to-day, with their respective steeples, I shall never forget.

Breslau: September 11.

This is a queer old city as you ever heard of. High as Edinburgh, or more so. Streets very strait and winding; roofs thirty feet or so in height, and of proportionate steepness, ending in chimney-heads like the half of a butter firkin set on its side. The people are not beautiful, but they seem innocent and obliging, brown-skinned, scrubby

bodies, a good many of them of Polack or Slavic breed. More power to their elbow! You never saw such churches, Rath-houses, &c., old as the hills, and of huge proportions. An island in the Oder here is completely covered with cathedrals and appendages. Brown women with cock noses, snubby in character, have all got straw hats, umbrellas, crinolines, &c., as fashion orders, and are no doubt charming to the brown man. Neuberg is a perfect Issachar for taking labour on him; needs to be led with a strongish curb. Scratchy Foxton and he are much more tolerable together. Grease plus vinegar, that is the rule.

Prag: September 14, 1858.

From Breslau, where I wrote last, our adventures have been miscellaneous, our course painful but successful. At Landshut, edge of the *Riesen Gebirge*, where we arrived near eleven the first night, in a crazy vehicle of one horse, you never saw such a scene of squalid desolation. I had pleased myself with the thoughts of a cup of hot milk, such as is generally procurable in German inns. *Umsonst!* no milk in the house! no nothing! only a *ruhiges Zimmer* not opened for weeks past, by the smell of it. I mostly missed sleep. Our drive next day through the *Riesen Gebirge* into Bohemian territory was as beautiful as any I ever had. It ended in confusion, getting into railways full of dirty, smoking, Sunday gents, fully as ugly on the Elbe there as on the Thames nearer you. We had passed the sources of the Elbe early in the day; then crossed it at night. We have not far quitted it since, nor shall till we pass Dresden. The gents that night led us to a place called *Pardubitz*, terribly familiar to me from those dull 'Frederick' books, where one of the detestablest nights of all this expedition was provided me. Big, noisy inn, full of evil smells; contemptible little wicked village, where a worse than jerry-shop close over the way raged like Bedlam or Erebus, to cheer one, in a bed, *i.e.*, trough, eighteen inches too short, and a mattress forced into it which cocked up at both ends as if you had been in the trough of a saddle. *Ach Himmel!*

We left it at 4 a.m. to do the hardest day's work of any. Chotusitz, Kolin—such a day, in a wicked vehicle with a spavined horse, amid clouds of dust, under a blazing sun. I was half-mad on getting hither at 8.30 p.m., again by the railway carriage, among incidental groups of the nastiest kind of gents.

The Bohemians are a different people from the Germans proper. Yesterday not one in a hundred of them could understand a word of German. They are liars, thieves, slatterns, a kind of miserable subter-Irish people—Irish with the addition of ill-nature and a disposition decidedly disobliging. We called yesterday at an inn on the battlefield of Kolin, where Frederick had gone aloft to take a survey of the ground. 'The Golden Sun' is still its title; but it has sunk to be the dirtiest house probably in Europe, and with the nastiest-looking, ill-thriving spectre of a landlady, who had not even a glass of beer, if Foxton could have summoned courage to drink it in honour of the occasion.

This is a grand picturesque town, this Prag. To-day we had our own difficulties in getting masters of the Ziscaberg, Sterbehohe, and other localities of the battle which young ladies play on the piano—but on the whole it was light compared with the throes of yesterday. Here is an authentic wild pink plucked from the battlefield. Give it to some young lady who practises the 'Battle of Prague' on her piano to your satisfaction.

There are now but three battlefields to do, one double, day after to-morrow by a return ticket to be had in Dresden, the two next—Torgau, Rossbach—in two days following. Poor Neuberg has fairly broken down by excess of yesterday's labour, and various misery. He gave up the Hradschin (*Radsheen* they pronounce it) to Foxton and me, though one of the chief curiosities of Prag, and has gone to bed—a noisy bed—with little nursing, poor man; but hopes to be roadworthy to-morrow again. He is the mainstay of every enterprise—I could not do without him—and Foxton is good for absolutely nothing, except to neutralize him, which he pretty much does.

Dresden, September 15, 1858.

I have got your second letter here—a delightful little letter, which I read sitting on the Elbe bridge in the sunshine after I had got my face washed, with such a struggle, and could get leave to feel like Jonah after being vomited from the whale's belly. Our journey from Prag has excelled, in confusion, all I ever witnessed in the world; the beautifullest country ever seen too, and the beautifullest weather —but, *Ach Gott!* However, we are now near the end of it. . . I am not hurt; I really do not think myself much hurt—but, oh what a need of sleep, of silence, of a right good washing with soap and water all over!

On September 22 he was safe at home again at Chelsea—having finished his work in exactly a month. Nero was there to 'express a decent joy' at seeing him again—Nero, but not his mistress. She was away in Scotland with her friends, Dr. and Mrs. Russell. He had charged her not to return on his account as long as she was getting good from the change of air and scene. On the twenty-third he sent her the history of the rest of his adventures.

Our journey after Dresden continued, with the usual velocity and tribulation, over Hochkirch—beautiful outlook from the steeple there, and beautiful epitaph on Marshal Keith, one of the seven hundred that perished on that spot, the church doors still holed with the musketry there—over Leipzig, where Foxton rejoined us after our thrice-toilsome day at Torgau; then from Weissenfeld over Rossbach, the last in our series, thank Heaven! We then got into the Weimar train, found little M——, and, what was better, a fine, quiet bed-room, looking out upon decent garden-ground in the inn already known to me, where I procured a human sleep, and also a tub with water enough next morning—and, in short, was greatly refreshed; the rather as I absolutely refused to go about except in the narrowest limits next day,

and preferred lying on my bed, asleep or not, to all the 'sights' in nature. At three p.m. we had to go again. The Grand Duchess sent a telegram—being telegraphed to—most gracious, but it was to no purpose. I did wish to see the high lady—very clever and distinguished, everybody says—but it involved waiting twenty-four hours in an uncertain hostelry at Eisenach, and then getting off at two a.m., therefore resolutely, 'No, Illustrious Madame.' Next day from Guntershausen, near Cassel, to Aix-la-Chapelle, was among the hardest in my experience of physical misery—begins at four a.m., no sleep behind it, nor any food before it, and lasts incessantly till seven p.m.; oftenest in slow trains through broiling sun, sand clouds, and manufacturing smoke. My living was a cup of most lukewarm coffee, swallowed like physic, which it much resembled, as all German coffee does, and poor eating to it; not even a crumb of bread and butter; raw ham and bread, to be washed down too in one minute of time. On this, with a glass of soda water and cognac and farthing loaf of tough bread picked up somewhere, human nature had to subsist to Aix, arrive there about seven. . . About half-past eight try to eat if you could something tepid and questionable. Happily the bed was once more human—I was thoroughly done up.

Next morning stand upon the *lid* of Charlemagne—abominable monks roaring out their idolatrous grand music within sight. Then embark again—arrive at Ostend six to seven p.m., get on board a boat to Dover (mail steamer), six hours—nothing to be had as living, Neuberg and others very sick. In Dover one a.m., tumult of custom-houses, of overcrowded inns; in despair try *tea* and retire to one's garret, with nothing to depend on but lucifers and tobacco through the night. It was not so bad as might have been expected. Next day a fine train up to town, Foxton branching off at Redhill, and taking leave almost with tears. By the river steamer I reach home half-past four, or rather later. To-day, after a good sleep, good coffee, &c., I have as bad a headache as need be desired, and trace the *Strapazen* of this journey in a lively manner. I feel in me, down in the breast

chiefly, the stock of cold I have had secretly these three weeks, but otherwise ail nothing.

Such was Carlyle's second tour in Germany, as sketched in these letters by himself. One misses something of the liveliness of the experiences of the first, when everything was new, and was seized upon by his insatiable curiosity. It was a journey of business, and was executed with a vigour and rapidity remarkable in so old a man. There were fewer complaints about sleep—fewer complaints of any kind. How well his surveying work was done, the history of Frederick's campaigns, when he came to write them, were ample evidence. He speaks lightly of having seen Kolin, Torgau, &c., &c. No one would guess from reading these short notices that he had mastered the details of every field which he visited; not a turn of the ground, not a brook, not a wood, or spot where wood had been, had escaped him. Each picture was complete in itself, unconfused with any other; and, besides the picture, there was the character of the soil, the extent of cultivation—every particle of information which would help to elucidate the story.

There are no mistakes. Military students in Germany are set to learn Frederick's battles in Carlyle's account of them—altogether an extraordinary feat on Carlyle's part, to have been accomplished in so short a time. His friends had helped him no doubt; but the eye that saw and the mind that comprehended were his own.

Very soon after his return the already finished volumes of 'Frederick' were given to the world. No

work of his had as yet obtained so instant and wide a welcome. The literary success was immediate and exceptionally great. 2,000 copies had been printed —they were sold at the first issue. A second 2,000 were disposed of almost as rapidly, and by December there was a demand for more. He had himself been singularly indifferent on this part of the business. In his summer correspondence there is not a single word of expectation or anxiety. As little was there sign of exultation when the world's verdict was pronounced. The child that is born with greatest difficulty is generally a favourite, but it was not so in this instance. In his journal he speaks of the book as 'by far the most heartrending enterprise he had ever had' as 'worth nothing,' though 'faithfully done on his part.' In Scotland he describes himself as having been 'perfectly dormant,' 'in a sluggish, sad way, till the end of August.' In Germany he had seen the battlefields—'a quite frightful month of physical discomfort,' with no result that he could be sure of, 'except a great mischief to health.' He had returned, he said, 'utterly broken and degraded.' This state of feeling, exaggerated as it was, survived the appearance of the two volumes. He had complained little while the journey was in progress—when he was at home again there was little else but sadness and dispiritment.

Journal.

December 28th, 1858.—Book was published soon after my return; has been considerably more read than usual with books of mine; much babbled of in newspapers. No better to me than the barking of dogs. *Verachtung, ja Nicht*

achtung my sad feeling about it. Officious people three or four times put 'reviews' into my hands, and in an idle hour I glanced partly into these; but it would have been better not, so sordidly ignorant and impertinent were they, though generally laudatory. *Ach Gott, allein, allein auf dieser Erde!* However, the fifth thousand is printed, paid for I think—some 2,800*l.* in all—and will be sold by-and-by with a money profit, and perhaps others not useless to me. One has to believe that there are rational beings in England who read one's poor books and are silent about them. Edition of *works*[1] is done too. Larkin, a providential blessing to me in that and in the 'Frederick.' I am fairly richer at this time than I ever was, in the money sense—rich *enough* for all practical purposes—otherwise no luck for me till I have done the final two volumes. Began that many weeks ago, but cannot get rightly into it yet, struggle as I may. Health unfavourable, horse exercise defective, villanous ostlers found to be starving my horse. Much is 'defective,' much is against me; especially my own fidelity of perseverance in endeavour. Ah me, would I were through it! I feel then as if sleep would fall upon me, perhaps the last and perfect sleep. I haggle and struggle here all day, ride then in the twilight like a hunted ghost; speak to nobody; have nobody whom it gladdens me to speak to. Truce to complaining.

A few words follow which I will quote also, as they tell of something which proved of immeasurable consequence, both to Carlyle and to his wife.

Lord Ashburton has wedded again—a Miss Stuart Mackenzie—and they are off to Egypt about a fortnight ago. 'The changes of this age,' as minstrel Burns has it, 'which fleeting Time procureth!' Ah me! ah me!

Carlyle sighed; but the second Lady Ashburton became the guardian genius of the Cheyne Row house-

[1] Collected edition of Carlyle's works.

hold; to Mrs. Carlyle the tenderest of sisters, to Carlyle, especially after his own bereavement, sister, daughter, mother, all that can be conveyed in the names of the warmest human ties. . . But the acquaintance had yet to begin. Miss Stuart Mackenzie had hitherto been seen by neither of them.

CHAPTER XXV.

A.D. 1859–62. ÆT. 64–67.

Effects of a Literary Life upon the Character—Evenings in Cheyne Row—Summers in Fife—Visit to Sir George Sinclair, Thurso Castle—Mrs. Carlyle's Health—Death of Arthur Clough—Intimacy with Mr. Ruskin—Party at the Grange—Description of John Keble—'Unto this Last.'

No one who has read the letters of Carlyle in the preceding chapters can entertain a doubt of the tenderness of his heart, or of his real gratitude to those relations and friends who were exerting themselves to be of use to him. As little can anyone have failed to notice the waywardness of his humour, the gusts of 'unjust impatience' and 'sulky despair' with which he received sometimes their best endeavours to serve him, or, again, the remorse with which he afterwards reflected on his unreasonable outbursts. 'The nature of the beast' was the main explanation. His temperament was so constituted. It could not be altered, and had to be put up with, like changes of weather. But nature and circumstances worked together; and Lord Jeffrey had judged rightly when he said that literature was not the employment best suited to a person of Carlyle's disposition. In active life a man works at the side of others. He has to consider them as well as himself. He has to check his impatience,

he has to listen to objections even when he knows that he is right. He must be content to give and take, to be indifferent to trifles, to know and feel at all times that he is but one among many, who have all their humours. Every day, every hour teaches him the necessity of self-restraint. The man of letters has no such wholesome check upon himself. He lives alone, thinks alone, works alone. He must listen to his own mind; for no other mind can help him. He requires correction as others do; but he must be his own school-master. His peculiarities are part of his originality, and may not be eradicated. The friends among whom he lives are not the partners of his employment; they share in it, if they share at all, only as instruments or dependants. Thus he is an autocrat in his own circle, and exposed to all the temptations which beset autocracy. He is subject to no will, no law, no authority outside himself; and the finest natures suffer something from such unbounded independence. . . Carlyle had been made by nature sufficiently despotic, and needed no impulse in that direction from the character of his occupations, —while his very virtues helped to blind him when it would have been better if he could have been more on his guard. He knew that his general aim in life was pure and unselfish, and that in the use of his time and talents he had nothing to fear from the sternest examination of his stewardship. His conscience was clear. His life from his earliest years had been pure and simple, without taint of selfish ambition. He had stood upright always in many trials. He had become at last an undisputed intellectual sovereign over a large section of his contemporaries, who looked

to him as disciples to a master whose word was a law to their belief. And thus habit, temperament, success itself had combined to deprive him of the salutary admonitions with which the wisest and best of mortals cannot entirely dispense. From first to last he was surrounded by people who allowed him his own way, because they felt his superiority—who found it a privilege to minister to him as they became more and more conscious of his greatness—who, when their eyes were open to his defects, were content to put up with them, as the mere accidents of a nervously sensitive organization.

This was enough for friends who could be amused by peculiarities from which they did not personally suffer. But for those who actually lived with him—for his wife especially, on whom the fire-sparks fell first and always, and who could not escape from them—the trial was hard. The central grievance was gone, but was not entirely forgotten. His letters had failed to assure her of his affection, for she thought at times that they must be written for his biographer. She could not doubt his sincerity when, now after his circumstances became more easy, he gave her free command of money; when, as she could no longer walk, he insisted that she should have a brougham twice a week to drive in, and afterwards gave her a carriage of her own. But affection did not prevent outbursts of bilious humour, under which, for a whole fortnight, she felt as if she was 'keeper in a mad-house.'[1] When he was at a distance from her he was passionately anxious about her health. When he was at home, his own discomforts, real or imaginary,

[1] *Letters and Memorials*, vol. iii. p. 4.

left no room for thought of others. 'If Carlyle wakes once in a night,' she said to me, 'he will complain of it for a week. I wake thirty times every night, but that is nothing.' Notwithstanding all his resolutions, notwithstanding the fall of 'the scales from his eyes' and the intended amendment for the future, things relapsed in Cheyne Row after Carlyle returned from Germany, and settled again to his work, much into their old condition. Generally the life was smooth and uneventful, but the atmosphere was always dubious, and a disturbed sleep or an indigestion would bring on a thunderstorm. Mrs. Carlyle grew continually more feeble, continual nervous anxiety allowing her no chance to rally; but her indomitable spirit held her up; she went out little in the evenings, but she had her own small tea parties, and the talk was as brilliant as ever. Carlyle worked all day, rode late in the afternoon, came home, slept a little, then dined and went out afterwards to walk in the dark. If any of us were to spend the evening there, we generally found her alone; then he would come in, take possession of the conversation and deliver himself in a stream of splendid monologue, wise, tender, scornful, humorous, as the inclination took him—but never bitter, never malignant, always genial, the fiercest denunciations ending in a burst of laughter at his own exaggerations. Though I knew things were not altogether well, and her drawn, suffering face haunted me afterwards like a sort of ghost, I felt for myself that in him there could be nothing really wrong, and that he was as good as he was great.

So passed the next two or three years; he toiling

on unweariedly, dining nowhere, and refusing to be disturbed—contenting himself with now and then sending his brother word of his general state.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea, March 14, 1859.

We go along here in the common way, or a little below it, neither of us specially definable as ill, but suffering (possibly from the muddy torpid weather), under unusual *feebleness*, and wishing we were a little stronger. Jane keeps afoot; takes her due drives, tries walking when the weather permits, and is surely a good deal better than she has been wont to be in the last two years. But her weakness is very great; her power of *eating* runs very low, poor soul. To day she seems to be trying total abstinence, or something near it, by way of remedy to a constant nausea she complains of. 'We must do the best we can for a living, boy!' As to me, the worst is a fatal inability to get forward with my work in this state of nerves and stomach. I am dark, inert, and stupid to a painful degree, when progress depends almost altogether on vivacity of nerves. The remedy is . . . there is no remedy but boring along mole-like or mule-like, and refusing to lie down altogether.

In June after 'months of uselessness and wretchedness,' he was 'tumbled' into what he called 'active chaos,' i.e. he took a house for the summer at Humbie, near Aberdour in Fife. The change was not very successful. He had his horse with him, and 'rode fiercely about, haunted by the ghosts of the past.' Mrs. Carlyle followed him down. John Carlyle was charged to meet her at Edinburgh, and see her safe for the rest of her journey. 'Be good and soft with her,' he said, 'you have no notion what ill any flurry or fuss does her, and I know always how kind your thoughts are, and also hers, in spite of any flaws that may

arise.' Was it that he could not 'reck his own rede!' or was Mrs. Carlyle herself exaggerating, when she described the next fortnight with him at Humbie, as like being in a 'madhouse'? They went afterwards to the cousins at Auchtertool, and from Auchtertool she wrote the sad letter to a young friend in London who had asked to be congratulated on her marriage.[1] They remained in Scotland till the end of September. At Chelsea again, on the 3rd of October, he wrote a few words in his journal, the last entered there for several years.

'Returned Saturday night from a long miscellaneous sojourn in Scotland which has lasted very idly and not too comfortably since the last days of June. Bathing, solitary riding, walking, one or two fits of catarrhal illness of a kind I did not like; this and much solitary musing, reminiscence, and anticipation of a painful kind filled that fallow period. Perhaps both of us are a little better; one cannot hope much. A terrible task now ahead again. Steady! steady! To it then! Isabella, my good sister-in-law at Scotsbrig, was gone. Poor brother Jamie! We looked at the place of graves Tuesday last. There at least is peace; there is rest. Foolish tears almost surprised me.'

There was a short visit to the Grange in January (1860), another in April to Lord Sandwich at Hinchinbrook—from which he was frightened away prematurely by the arrival of Hepworth Dixon. He had evidently been troublesome at home, for from Hinchinbrook he wrote to his wife begging her 'to be patient with him.' 'He was the unhappy animal, but did not mean ill.' With these exceptions, and a week at Brighton in July, he stayed fixed at his desk,

[1] *Letters and Memorials*, vol. iii. p. 1.

and in August, leaving his wife in London, where nervousness had reduced her to the brink of a bilious fever, he went off, taking his work with him, to stay at Thurso Castle with Sir George Sinclair. There he remained several weeks, in seclusion as complete as he could wish. His letters were full and regular, though they did not give entire satisfaction.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Off Aberdeen Harbour: August 3, 1860.

Arrived here after what they call an excellent voyage, which indeed has had good weather and all other fine qualities except that finest, the possibility of reasonable sleeping. I have seldom seen such an overcrowded piggery of a place as we had to try that latter operation in.

I did manage a little, however, each night. I feel wonderfully tolerable after all is done; the *sound* in my ears either gone or else lost amid other innumerable clankings, snorings, and clangours. Thank God we are got so far with success. Could I only hear that my poor Jeannie is a little come round again, now that the noises and disturbances from my side of the house are done.

Thurso Castle: August 6, 1860.

Saturday—wet, dreary, gaunt, and strange—was a little dispiriting, in spite of the cordial and eager welcome of all these good people. But that night I had a capital sleep. Next morning I contrived to shirk church (which I shall always do) and walked along the many-sounding shore with a book, a cape, and a little tobacco, some mile or two among the cliffs and crags. Not a human being visible; only the grand ever-murmuring sea; Pentland Frith clear as crystal, with Orkney Hoy Island, a fine precipitous sea-girt mountain, to our left, and Dunnet Head some six or seven miles ahead. There I sate and sauntered in the devoutest, quietest, and handsomest mood I have been in for many months. Then I read, bathed carefully, and set out vigorously walking to arrive *warm* and also punctual. In short, dear, I did well

yesterday and have had again a tolerable sleep. Nay, have got my affairs settled, so to speak; breakfast an hour *before* the family (who don't get into their worship, &c., till ten), am not to show face at all till three p.m. and mean actually to try some work. If I can it will be very fine for me.

The little butler here seems one of the cleverest, willingest creatures I have seen for a long time, and is zealously anxious (as hitherto all and sundry are) to oblige the monster come among them.

Thurso, visible, about two gunshots off, from one of my windows, is a poor grey town, treeless, with one or two steam-engines in it, and a dozen or two of fishing-boats. Nor is Thurso Castle much of a mansion, at least till you examine it attentively. But it is really an extensive, well-furnished, human dwelling-place; and its situation with its northern parapet, looking down upon the actual waves which never go a stone's throw off, is altogether charming; a place built at three different times, from 1664 downwards (quite modern this my northern side of it), with four or five poor candle-extinguisher-like towers in different parts, very bare, but trim, with walks and sheltering offices and walls. No saddle horse; not even a saddle shelty; but there is a carriage and pair for the womankind, with whom I have not yet gone, though I mean to.

August 14.

My dear little Goody,—I could have been somewhat fretted yesterday morning. First at your long delay in writing, and your perverse notion of *my* neglect in that particular, also of your scornful condemnation of my descriptive performance (which I can assure you was not done for the sake of future biographers, nor done at all except with considerable pain and inconvenience and at the very first moment possible in my gloom and sickliness, if you had known of it). But all feelings were swallowed up in one—grief and alarm at the sleepless, excited, and altogether painful state my poor little Jeannie had evidently got into. A long letter was to have been written yesterday afternoon after work and bathing and dinner were well over. But, alas!

at dinner (which had been unexpectedly crowded forward to two p.m. instead of three, and had sent me into the sea and back again at full gallop, not to miss the essential daily bath)—at dinner, which I found them denominating luncheon, I was informed that three miles off, at some Highland laird's named Major ——, there stood an engagement for me of a strict nature, and that there I was to dine. *Nimmer und Nimmermehr.* The major had not even asked me. I want no acquaintance with any laird or major. I positively cannot go. It was in vain that I insisted and reiterated in this key. Poor Sir George offered to dine now and go walking with me on the sands while the major's dinner went on.

In short I found I should give offence and seem a very surly, unthankful fellow by persisting, so I was obliged to go. The laird, an old Peninsula soldier, was not a bad fellow; quite the reverse indeed; had a wife and wife's sister and a son just from India and the Crimea; finally a very pretty Highland place, and a smart douce little daughter who made the Caithness dialect beautiful. Of myself I will say only that I have cunningly adjusted my hours; am called at eight, bathe as at home, run out from heat: breakfast privately, and by this means shirk 'prayers'—am at work by ten, bathe at two, and do not show face till three. After which comes walking, comes probably driving. Country equal to Craigenputtock for picturesque effects, *plus* the sea, which is always one's friend. I have got some work done every day; have slept every night, never quite ill, once or twice splendidly.

Carlyle abhorred the 'picturesque,' when sought after of set purpose. He was exquisitely sensitive of natural beauty, when he came across it naturally and surrounded by its own associations. Here is a finished picture which he sent to his brother.

To John Carlyle.

Thurso: August 24, 1860.

I sit boring over my work, not idle quite, but with little visible result, and that has considerably weakened the strength of my position here. I dimly intended to hold on for 'about a month;' and this is not unlikely to be the limit. Sir G. has always professed to be clear for two months as the minimum, but will perhaps be at bottom not so averse to the shorter term, there being such a cackle of grandchildren here, with governesses &c., whom he sees to be a mere bore to me, though to him such a joy. Yesterday we went to John o' Groats actually. It is about twenty miles from us to the little seaside inn. There you dismount, walk to Groats, *i.e.* to the mythic site of Groats—a short mile—thence two rather long ones to the top of Duncansby Head.

It is one of the prettiest shores I ever saw: trim grass or fine corn, even to the very brow of the sea. Sand (where there is sand) as white as meal, and between sand and farm-field a *glacis* or steep slope, which is also covered with grass, in some places thick with meadow-sweet, 'Queen of the Meadows,' and quite odoriferous as well as trim. The island of Stroma flanks it, across a sound of perhaps two miles broad. Three ships were passing westward in our time. The old wreck of a fourth was still traceable in fragments, sticking in the sand, or leant on harrows higher up by way of fence. The site of Groats has a barn short way behind it, and a cottage short way to its left looking seaward. The waves are about a pistol shot off at high water. It stands—*i.e.* a house would stand—very beautifully, as at the bottom of a kind of scoop rising slowly behind into highish country, ditto to west, though not into great heights at all, and the big Duncansby quite grandly screening it both from E. and N.E.; and all was so admirably still and solitary: extensive Cheviot sheep nibbling all about, and no other living thing, like a dream. The Orkneys, Ronald Shay, Skerries, &c., lay dim, dreamlike, with a beauty as of sorrow in the dim grey day. Groats' site appeared to me terribly like some

extinct farmer's lime-kiln. Rain broke out on coming home, and I lost a good portion of my sleep last night by the adventure. This is all I have to say of Groats or myself.

Amid these scenes, and heartily conscious of his host's kind consideration for him, he stayed out his holiday. He had wished his wife to have a taste of Scotch air too before the winter, and had arranged that she should go to his sister at the Gill. She had started, and was staying on the way with her friends the Stanleys at Alderley, when her husband discovered that he could do no more at Thurso, and must get home again. The period of his visit had been indefinite. She had supposed that he would remain longer than he proposed to do. The delay of posts and a misconstruction of meanings led Mrs. Carlyle to suppose that he was about to return to Chelsea immediately, and that her own presence there would be indispensable; and, with a resentment, which she did not care to conceal, at his imagined want of consideration for her, she gave up her expedition and went back. It was a mistake throughout, for he had intended himself to take Annandale on his way home from Thurso; but he had not been explicit enough, and she did not spare him. He was very miserable and very humble. He promised faithfully that when at home again he would worry her no more till she was strong enough to be 'kept onasy.'

I will be quiet as a dream (he said). Surely I ought to be rather a protection to your poor sick fancy than a new disturbance. Be still; be quiet. I swear to do thee no mischief at all.

Alas! he might swear; but with the excellentest

intentions, he was an awkward companion for a nervous, suffering woman. He had *meant* no mischief. It was impossible that he could have meant it. His misfortune was that he had no perception. He never understood that a delicate lady was not like his own robuster kindred, and might be shivered into fiddle-strings while they would only have laughed.

This was his last visit to Scotland before the completion of 'Frederick.' A few words to Mr. Erskine, who had written to inquire about his wife, give a more accurate account of his own condition than it gave of hers.

To Thomas Erskine, Esq.

Chelsea: October 12, 1860.

I got home nearly three weeks ago. Jane was not weaker than I expected; her house, poor soul, all set in order on an improved footing as to servants, almost pathetic as well as beautiful to me. I am happy to report that she has grown stronger ever since, and is now once more in her usual posture. I have got my smithy fire kindled again, and there is sound of the hammer once more audible. I have sunk silent, humiliated, endeavouring to be quietly, wisely, not foolishly, diligent with all the strength left to me. 'Frederick' is not the most pious of my heroes; but the work awakens in me either piety or else despair. Why have I not a more pious labour to end with? perhaps not to be able to end. But one must not quarrel with one's kind of labour. To do it is the thing requisite. My horse is potent for riding, and one of the loyallest quadrupeds. That perhaps is the finest item in the horoscope.

The 'improved footing' as to servants had been Carlyle's own arrangement. In his wife's weakened condition he thought it no longer right that she should be left to struggle on with a single maid-of-

all-work. He had insisted that she should have a superior class of woman as cook and housekeeper, with a girl to assist. He himself was fixed to his garret room again, rarely stirring out except to ride, and dining nowhere save now and then with Forster, to meet only Dickens, who loved him with all his heart.

The new year brought the Grange again, where Mrs. Carlyle was now as glad to go as before she had been reluctant.

> Everybody (he wrote) as kind as possible, especially the lady. This party small and insignificant; nobody but ourselves and Venables, an honest old dish, and Kingsley, a new, of higher pretensions, but inferior flavour.

The months went by. On March 27 a bulletin to his brother says:—'I have no news; nothing but the old silent struggle continually going on; for my very dreams, when I have any, are apt to be filled with it. A daily ride nearly always in perfect solitude, a daily and nightly escort of confused babblements, and thoughts not cheerful to speak of, yet with hope more legible at times than formerly, and on the whole with health better rather than worse.

In this year he lost a friend whom he valued beyond any one of the younger men whom he had learnt to know. Arthur Clough died at Florence, leaving behind him, of work accomplished, a translation of Plutarch, a volume of poems (which by-and-by, when the sincere writing of this ambitious age of ours is sifted from the insincere, may survive as an evidence of what he might have been had fulness of years been granted to him), and, besides these, a beautiful

memory in the minds of those who had known him. I knew what Carlyle felt about him, and I tried to induce him to write some few words which might give that memory an enduring form.

I quite agree in what you say of poor Clough (he replied). A man more vivid, ingenious, veracious, mildly radiant, I have seldom met with, and in a character so honest, modest, kindly. I expected very considerable things of him. As for the 'two pages' you propose, there could, had my hands been loose, have been no valid objection, but, as it is, my hands are tied.

Every available moment had been guaranteed to 'Frederick.' Clough was gone; but another friendship had been formed which was even more precious to Carlyle. He had long been acquainted with Ruskin, but hitherto there had been no close intimacy between them, *art* not being a subject especially interesting to him. But Ruskin was now writing his 'Letters on Political Economy' in the 'Cornhill Magazine.' The world's scornful anger witnessed to the effect of his strokes, and Carlyle was delighted. Political Economy had been a creed while it pretended to be a science. Science rests on reason and experiment, and can meet an opponent with calmness. A creed is always sensitive. To express a doubt of it shakes its authority, and is therefore treated as a moral offence. One looks back with amused interest on that indignant outcry now, when the pretentious science has ceased to answer a political purpose and has been banished by its chief professor to the exterior planets.

But Carlyle had hitherto been preaching alone in the wilderness, and rejoiced in this new ally. He

examined Ruskin more carefully. He saw, as who that looked could help seeing, that here was a true 'man of genius,' peculiar, uneven, passionate, but wielding in his hand real levin bolts, not mere flashes of light merely—but fiery arrows which pierced, where they struck, to the quick. He was tempted one night to go to hear Ruskin lecture, not on the 'Dismal Science,' but on some natural phenomena, which Ruskin, while the minutest observer, could convert into a poem. 'Sermons in Stones' had been already Carlyle's name for 'The Stones of Venice.' Such a preacher he was willing to listen to on any subject.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: April 23, 1861.

Friday last I was persuaded—in fact had unwarily compelled myself, as it were—to a lecture of Ruskin's at the Institution, Albemarle-street. Lecture on Tree Leaves as physiological, pictorial, moral, symbolical objects. A crammed house, but tolerable to me even in the gallery. The lecture was thought to 'break down,' and indeed it quite did '*as a lecture*;' but only did from *embarras des richesses*—a rare case. Ruskin did blow asunder as by gunpowder explosions his leaf notions, which were manifold, curious, genial; and, in fact, I do not recollect to have heard in that place any neatest thing I liked so well as this chaotic one.

This was a mere episode, however, in a life which was as it were chained down to 'an undoable task.' Months went by; at last the matter became so complicated, and the notes and corrections so many, that the printers were called in to help. The rough fragments of manuscript were set in type that he might see his way through them.

You never saw such a jumble of horrors as the first proofs are (he said in reporting the result). In my bewildering, *index*less state, and with such books and blockheadism, I cannot single-handed deal with the thing except stage after stage in this tentative way. Often enough I am doing the very last revise when, after such screwing and torturing, the really vital *point* of the matter—rule of all the articulation it must have—will disclose itself to me, *overlooked* by the fifty Dryasdusts I have been consulting.

Alas! (he cries at another time) my poor old limbs are nothing like so equal to this work as they once were; a fact that, but an irremediable one. Seldom was a poor man's heart so near broken by utter weariness, disgust, and long-continued despair over an undoable job. The only point is, said heart must not break altogether, but *finish* if it can.

No leisure—leisure even for thought—could be spared to other subjects. Even the great phenomenon of the century, the civil war in America, passed by him at its opening without commanding his serious attention. To him that tremendous struggle for the salvation of the American nationality was merely the efflorescence of the 'Nigger Emancipation' agitation, which he had always despised. 'No war ever raging in my time,' he said, when the first news of the fighting came over, 'was to me more profoundly foolish-looking. Neutral I am to a degree: I for one.' He spoke of it scornfully as 'a smoky chimney which had taken fire.' When provoked to say something about it publicly, it was to write his brief *Ilias Americana in nuce.*

Peter of the North (to Paul of the South): Paul, you unaccountable scoundrel, I find you hire your servants for life, not by the month or year as I do. You are going straight to Hell, you ——

Paul: Good words, Peter. The risk is my own. I am willing to take the risk. Hire you your servants by the month or the day, and get straight to Heaven; leave me to my own method.

Peter: No, I won't. I will beat your brains out first! [And is trying dreadfully ever since, but cannot yet manage it.[1]]

T. C.

At the Grange, where he had gone in January 1862, the subject was of course much talked of. The Argyles were there, the Sartoris's, the Kingsleys, the Bishop of Oxford, Milnes, Venables, and others. The Duke and Duchess were strong for the North, and there was much arguing, not to Carlyle's satisfaction. The Bishop and he were always pleased to meet each other, but he was not equally tolerant of the Bishop's friends. Of one of these there is a curious mention in a letter written from the Grange during this visit. Intellect was to him a quality which only showed itself in the discovery of truth. In science no man is allowed to be a man of intellect who uses his faculties to go ingeniously wrong. Still less could Carlyle acknowledge the presence of such high quality in those who went wrong in more important subjects. Cardinal Newman, he once said to me, had not the intellect of a moderate-sized rabbit. He was yet more uncomplimentary to another famous person whom the English Church has canonized.

[1] *Macmillan's Magazine,* August 1863.— Carlyle admitted to me after the war ended that perhaps he had not seen into the bottom of the matter. Nevertheless, he republished the *Ilias* in his Collected Works.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

The Grange: January 1862.

We are a brisk party here, full of locomotion, speculation, and really are in some sort agreeable to one another. The Bear, the Duke, with the womankind wholly, are off some twenty miles, mostly in an open carriage. The Bishop is gone with them, to see some little ape called Keble, of 'The Christian Year.' He (the Bishop) is very perceptibly older in the face, but no change in the shifty, cunning, thorough-going ways of him. He took me riding yesterday, galloping as if for the King's Hundred to see something which he called the Beacon Hill, which we never saw, daylight failing us, though we had a gallop of some sixteen miles. You may figure whether it suited me in my feverish feeble mood. The most agreeable man among us is the Duke; really a good, solid, Scotch product. Takes, I think, considerably to me, as does his Duchess, though I do not speak much to her. Find the Nigger question much a topic with her, and by no means a safe one.

'Frederick,' meanwhile, was making progress, though but slowly. The German authorities he found to be raw metallic matter, unwrought, unorganised, the ore nowhere smelted out of it. It is curious that on the human side of things the German genius should be so deficient, but so it is. We go to them for poetry, philosophy, criticism, theology. They have to come to us for a biography of their greatest poets and the history of their greatest king. The standard Life of Goethe in Germany is Lewes's; the standard History of Frederick is Carlyle's. But the labour was desperate, and told heavily both on him and on his wife. When the summer came she went for change to Folkestone. He in her absence was like a forsaken child.

Nothing is wrong about the house here (he wrote to her), nor have I failed in sleep or had other misfortune; nevertheless, I am dreadfully low-spirited, and feel like a child *wishing Mammy back* [italics his own]. Perhaps, too, she is as well away for the moment. The truth is, I am under medical appliances, which renders me for this day the wretchedest nearly of all the sons of Adam not yet condemned, in fact, to the gallows. I have not spoken one word to anybody since you went away. Oh! for God's sake, take care of yourself! In the earth I have no other.

Again, a few days later :—

July 2, 1862.

Silence, even of the saddest, sadder than death, is often preferable to shake the nonsense out of one. Last night, in getting to bed, I said to myself at last, 'Impossible, sir, that you have no friend in the big Eternities and Immensities, or none but Death, as you whimper to yourself. You have had friends who, before the birth of you even, were good to you, and did give you several things. Know that you have friends unspeakably important, it appears, and let not their aweful looks or doings quite terrify you. You require to have a heart like theirs in some sort. Who knows? And fall asleep upon that honourable pillow of whinstone.'

This was a singular dialogue for a man to hold with himself. 'A spectre moving in a world of spectres'—'one mass of burning sulphur'—these also were images in which he now and then described his condition. At such times, if his little finger ached he imagined that no mortal had ever suffered so before. If his liver was amiss he was a chained Prometheus with the vulture at his breast, and earth, ether, sea, and sky were invoked to witness his injuries. When the fit was on him he could not, would not, restrain himself, and now when Mrs.

Carlyle's condition was so delicate, her friends, medical and others, had to insist that they must be kept apart as much as possible. He himself, lost as he was without her, felt the necessity, and when she returned from Folkestone he sent her off to her friend Mrs. Russell in Nithsdale. Some one, I know not who, wrote to entreat her to stay away as long as possible. The letter runs:—

> I hope you do not think of returning home. Should Mr. Carlyle become rampageous I will set Mrs. —— on to pray for him. Should you, during your absence, require any transaction in London to be carried out with more than usual intelligence and finesse, remember
>
> MI.

But no one was more anxious than Carlyle himself now was that she should be saved from worries. As soon as he had clearly recognised how ill she was, his own grievances disappeared. There was no 'rampaging.' He was all that was thoughtful and generous. He called himself a 'desultory widow,' but he tried his best to be happy in his desertion, or at least to make her believe him so. . . She was afraid of costing him money. 'I positively order,' he wrote to her, 'that there be no pinching about money at all. Fie, fie! Here is a draft, which Dr. Russell, as banker, will pay when you ask.' Not a complaint escaped him in his daily letters. All was represented as going well; 'Frederick' was going well; the sleep was well; the servants were doing well. Fruit, flowers, cream, &c., came regularly in from Addiscombe—game boxes came with the grouse season. There was a certain botheration from visitors—'dirty wretches,' would call and be troublesome. It was the year of the

second Exhibition, which I believe Carlyle never entered, but which brought crowds to London—a party from Edinburgh among the rest who were well anathematized: but some one came now and then who was not 'dirty,' and on the whole the book went forward, and he himself worked, and rode, and grumbled at nothing, save the Scotch Sunday Post arrangements, which interrupted his correspondence. 'Truly,' he said, 'that Phariseean Sabbath and mode of disarming Almighty wrath by something better than the *sécret pour lui plaire* is getting quite odious to me, or inconvenient rather, for it has long been odious enough.'

The third volume of 'Frederick' was finished and published this summer. The fourth volume was getting into type, and the fifth and last was partly written. The difficulties did not diminish; 'one only consolation there was in it, that 'Frederick' was better worth doing than other foul tasks he had had.

At times (he said) I am quite downcast on my lonesome, long, interminable journey through the not Mount Horeb wilderness, but the beggarly 'Creca Moss' one. Then at other times I think with myself, 'Creca,' and the Infinite of barren, brambly moor is under Heaven too. What if thou could'st show the blockhead populations that withal, and get honourably out of this heart-breaking affair, pitied by the Eternal Powers! If I can hold out another year. Surely before this time twelvemonth we shall have done.

He rarely looked at reviews. He hardly ever read a newspaper of any kind. I do not remember that I ever saw one in his room. For once, however, he made an exception in favour of a notice of his last volume in the 'Saturday.'

It was by Venables (he said), not a bad thing at all—excellent in comparison to much that I suppose to be going, though I have only read this and one other. They really do me no ill, the adverse ones, or inconceivably little, and hardly any good, the most flattering of the friendly. In my bitter solitary struggle, continued almost to the death, I have got to such a contempt for the babble of idle, ignorant mankind about me as is sometimes almost appalling to myself. What am I to them in the presence of very fate and fact?

He had one other great pleasure this summer. Ruskin's 'Unto this Last,' a volume of essays on political economy, was now collected and re-published. Carlyle sent a copy to Mr. Erskine, with the following letter:—

To T. Erskine, Linlathen.

Chelsea: August 4, 1862.

Dear Mr. Erskine,—Here is a very bright little book of Ruskin's, which, if you have not already made acquaintance with it, is extremely well worth reading. Two years ago, when the Essays came out in the fashionable magazines, there rose a shriek of anathema from all newspaper and publishing persons. But I am happy to say that the subject is to be taken up again and heartily gone into by the valiant Ruskin, who, I hope, will reduce it to a *dog's likeness*—its real physiognomy for a long time past to the unenchanted eye, and peremptorily bid it prepare to quit this afflicted earth, as R. has done to several things before now. He seems to me to have the best talent for *preaching* of all men now alive. He has entirely blown up the world that used to call itself of 'Art,' and left it in an *impossible* posture, uncertain whether on its feet at all or on its head, and conscious that there will be no continuing on the bygone terms. If he could do as much for Political Economy (as I hope), it would be the greatest benefit achieved by preaching for generations past; the chasing off of one of the brutallest nightmares that ever sate on the bosom of slumbrous mankind, kept the *soul* of

them squeezed down into an invisible state, as if they had no soul, but only a belly and a beaver faculty in these last sad ages, and were about *arriving* we know where in consequence. I have read nothing that pleased me better for many a year than these new *Ruskiniana*.

I am sitting here in the open air under an awning with documentary materials by me in a butler's tray, desk, &c. for writing, being burnt out of my garret at last by the heat of the sun. I hope by this time twelvemonth I may be at Linlathen again; at least I do greatly wish it, if the hope be too presumptuous. There is a long stiff hill to get over first, but this is now really the last; fifth and final volume actually in hand, and surely, with such health as I still have, it may be possible. I must stand to it or do worse. . . London has not been so noisy and ugly for ten years, but this too is ending. . . Adieu, dear friend!

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A.D. 1864. ÆT. 69.

Personal intercourse—Daily habits—Charities—Conversation—Modern science and its tendencies—Faith without sight—Bishop Colenso—The Broad Church School—Literature—Misfortunes of Fritz—Serious accident to Mrs. Carlyle—Her strange illness—Folkestone—Death of Lord Ashburton—Mrs. Carlyle in Scotland—Her slow recovery—'Frederick' finished.

So far my account of Carlyle has been taken from written memorials, letters, diaries, and autobiographic fragments. For the future the story will form itself round my own personal intercourse with him. Up to 1860 I had lived in the country. I had paid frequent visits to London, and while there had seen as much of Cheyne Row and its inhabitants as Mrs. Carlyle would encourage. I had exchanged letters occasionally with her and her husband, but purely on external subjects, and close personal intimacy between us there had as yet been none. In the autumn of that year, however, London became my home. Late one afternoon, in the middle of the winter, Carlyle called on me, and said that he wished to see more of me—wished me in fact to be his companion, so far as I could, in his daily rides or walks. Ride with him I could not, having no horse; but the walks were most welcome—and from that date, for twenty years, up to his own death, except when either or both of us were out of

town, I never ceased to see him twice or three times a week, and to have two or three hours of conversation with him. The first of these walks I well remember, from an incident which happened in the course of it. It was after nightfall. At Hyde Park Corner, we found a blind beggar anxious to cross over from Knightsbridge to Piccadilly, but afraid to trust his dog to lead him through the carts and carriages. Carlyle took the beggar's arm, led him gently over, and offered to help him further on his way. He declined gratefully; we gave him some trifle, and followed him to see what he would do. His dog led him straight to a public-house in Park Lane. We both laughed, and I suppose I made some ill-natured remark. 'Poor fellow,' was all that Carlyle said; 'he perhaps needs warmth and shelter.'

This was the first instance that I observed of what I found to be a universal habit with him. Though still far from rich, he never met any poor creature, whose distress was evident, without speaking kindly to him and helping him more or less in one way or another. Archbishop Whately said that to relieve street beggars was a public crime. Carlyle thought only of their misery. 'Modern life,' he said, 'doing its charity by institutions,' is a sad hardener of our hearts. 'We should give for our own sakes. It is very low water with the wretched beings, one can easily see that.'

Even the imps of the gutters he would not treat as reprobates. He would drop a lesson in their way, sometimes with a sixpence to recommend it. . . A small vagabond was at some indecency. Carlyle touched him gently on the back with his stick. 'Do

you not know that you are a little man,' he said, 'and not a whelp, that you behave in this way?' There was no sixpence this time. Afterwards a lad of fourteen or so stopped us and begged. Carlyle lectured him for beginning so early at such a trade, told him how, if he worked, he might have a worthy and respectable life before him, and gave him sixpence. The boy shot off down the next alley. 'There is a sermon fallen on stony ground,' Carlyle said, 'but we must do what we can.' The crowds of children growing up in London affected him with real pain; these small plants, each with its head just out of the ground, with a whole life ahead, and such a training! I noticed another trait too—Scotch thrift showing itself in hatred of waste. If he saw a crust of bread on the roadway he would stop to pick it up and put it on a step or a railing. Some poor devil might be glad of it, or at worst a dog or a sparrow. To destroy wholesome food was a sin. He was very tender about animals, especially dogs, who, like horses, if well treated, were types of loyalty and fidelity. I horrified him with a story of my Oxford days. The hounds had met at Woodstock. They had drawn the covers without finding a fox, and, not caring to have a blank day, one of the whips had caught a passing sheep dog, rubbed its feet with aniseed, and set it to run. It made for Oxford in its terror, the hounds in full cry behind. They caught the wretched creature in a field outside the town, and tore it to pieces. I never saw Carlyle more affected. He said it was like a human soul flying for salvation before a legion of fiends.

Occupied as he had always seemed to be with high-soaring speculations, scornful as he had appeared,

in the 'Latter-day Pamphlets,' of benevolence, philanthropy, and small palliations of enormous evils, I had not expected so much detailed compassion in little things. I found that personal sympathy with suffering lay at the root of all his thoughts; and that attention to little things was as characteristic of his conduct as it was of his intellect.

His conversation when we were alone together was even more surprising to me. I had been accustomed to hear him impatient of contradiction, extravagantly exaggerative, overbearing opposition with bursts of scornful humour. In private I found him impatient of nothing but of being bored; gentle, quiet, tolerant; *sadly*-humoured, but never *ill*-humoured; ironical, but without the savageness, and when speaking of persons always scrupulously just. He saw through the 'clothes' of a man into what he actually was. But the sharpest censure was always qualified. He would say, 'If we knew how he came to be what he is, poor fellow, we should not be hard with him.'

But he talked more of things than of persons, and on every variety of subject. He had read more miscellaneously than any man I have ever known. His memory was extraordinary, and a universal curiosity had led him to inform himself minutely about matters which I might have supposed that he had never heard of. With English literature he was as familiar as Macaulay was. French and German and Italian he knew infinitely better than Macaulay, and there was this peculiarity about him, that if he read a book which struck him he never rested till he had learnt all that could be ascertained about the writer of it.

Thus his knowledge was not in points or lines, but complete and solid.

Even in his laughter he was always serious. I never heard a trivial word from him, nor one which he had better have left unuttered. He cared nothing for money, nothing for promotion in the world. If his friends gained a step anywhere he was pleased with it—but only as worldly advancement might give them a chance of wider usefulness. Men should think of their duty, he said;—let them do that, and the rest, as much as was essential, 'would be added to them.' I was with him one beautiful spring day under the trees in Hyde Park, the grass recovering its green, the elm buds swelling, the scattered crocuses and snowdrops shining in the sun. The spring, the annual resurrection from death to life, was especially affecting to him. 'Behold the lilies of the field!' he said to me; 'they toil not, neither do they spin. Yet Solomon, in all his glory, was not arrayed like one of these. What a word was that? and the application was quite true too. Take no thought for the morrow—care only for what you know to be right. That is the rule.'

He had a poor opinion of what is called science; of political economy; of utility as the basis of morals; and such-like, when they dealt with human life. He stood on Kant's Categorical Imperative. Right was right, and wrong was wrong, because God had so ordered; and duty and conduct could be brought under analysis only when men had disowned their nobler nature, and were governed by self-interest. Interested motives might be computed, and a science might grow out of a calculation of their forces. But love of Truth, love of Righteousness—these were not

calculable, neither these nor the actions proceeding out of them.

Sciences of natural things he always respected. *Facts* of all kinds were sacred to him. A fact, whatever it might be, was part of the constitution of the universe, and so was related to the Author of it. Of all men that have ever lived he honoured few more than Kepler. Kepler's '*laws*' he looked on as the grandest physical discovery ever made by man; and as long as philosophers were content, like Kepler, to find out facts without building theories on them to dispense with God, he had only good to say of them. Science, however, in these latter days, was stepping beyond its proper province, like the young Titans trying to take heaven by storm. He liked *ill* men like Humboldt, Laplace, or the author of the 'Vestiges.' He refused Darwin's transmutation of species as unproved; he fought against it, though I could see he dreaded that it might turn out true. If man, as explained by Science, was no more than a developed animal, and conscience and intellect but developments of the functions of animals, then God and religion were no more than inferences, and inferences which might be lawfully disputed. That the grandest achievements of human nature had sprung out of beliefs which might be mere illusions, Carlyle could not admit. That intellect and moral sense should have been put into him by a Being which had none of its own was distinctly not conceivable to him. It might perhaps be that these high gifts lay somewhere in the original germ, out of which organic life had been developed; that they had been intentionally and consciously placed there by the Author of

nature, whom religious instincts had been dimly able to discern. It might so turn out, but for the present the tendency of science was not in any such direction. The tendency of science was to Lucretian Atheism; to a belief that no 'intention' or intending mind was discoverable in the universe at all. If the life of man was no more than the life of an animal—if he had no relation, or none which he could discern, with any being higher than himself, God would become an unmeaning word to him. Carlyle often spoke of this, and with evident uneasiness. Earlier in his life, while he was young and confident, and the effects of his religious training were fresh in him, he could fling off the whispers of the scientific spirit with angry disdain; the existence, the omnipresence, the omnipotence of God, were then the strongest of his convictions. The faith remained unshaken in him to the end; he never himself doubted; yet he was perplexed by the indifference with which the Supreme Power was allowing its existence to be obscured. I once said to him, not long before his death, that I could only believe in a God which *did* something. With a cry of pain, which I shall never forget, he said, 'He does nothing.' For himself, however, his faith stood firm. He did not believe in historical Christianity. He did not believe that the facts alleged in the Apostles' creed had ever really happened. The resurrection of Christ was to him only a symbol of a spiritual truth. As Christ rose from the dead, so were we to rise from the death of sin to the life of righteousness. Not that Christ had actually died and had risen again. He was only *believed* to have died and *believed* to have risen in an age when legend was

history, when stories were accepted as true from their beauty or their significance. As long as it was supposed that the earth was the centre of the universe, that the sky moved round it, and that sun and moon and stars had been set there for man's convenience, when it was the creed of all nations that gods came down to the earth, and men were taken into heaven, and that between the two regions there was incessant intercourse, it could be believed easily that the Son of God had lived as a man among men, had descended like Hercules into Hades, and had returned again from it. Such a story then presented no internal difficulty at all. It was not so now. The soul of it was eternally true, but it had been bound up in a mortal body. The body of the belief was now perishing, and the soul of it being discredited by its connection with discovered error, was suspected not to be a soul at all; half mankind, betrayed and deserted, were rushing off into materialism. Nor was materialism the worst. Shivering at so blank a prospect, entangled in the institutions which remained standing when the life had gone out of them, the other half were 'reconciling faith with reason,' pretending to believe, or believing that they believed, becoming hypocrites, conscious or unconscious, the last the worst of the two, not daring to look the facts in the face, so that the very sense of truth was withered in them. It was to make love to delusion, to take falsehood deliberately into their hearts. For such souls there was no hope at all. Centuries of spiritual anarchy lay before the world before sincere belief could again be generally possible among men of knowledge and insight. With the

half-educated and ignorant it was otherwise. To them the existing religion might still represent some real truth. There alone was any open teaching of God's existence, and the divine sanction of morality. Each year, each day, as knowledge spread, the power of the established religion was growing less; but it was not yet entirely gone, and it was the only hold that was left on the most vital of all truths. Thus the rapid growth of materialism had in some degree modified the views which Carlyle had held in early and middle life. Then the 'Exodus from Houndsditch' had seemed as if it might lead immediately into a brighter region. He had come to see that it would be but an entry into a wilderness, the promised land lying still far away. His own opinions seemed to be taking no hold. He had cast his bread upon the waters and it was not returning to him, and the exodus appeared less entirely desirable. Sometimes the old fierce note revived. Sometimes, and more often as he grew older, he wished the old shelter to be left standing as long as a roof remained over it—as long as any of us could profess the old faith with complete sincerity. Sincerity, however, was indispensable. For men who said one thing and meant another, who entered the Church as a profession, and throve in the world by it, while they emasculated the creeds, and watered away the histories—for them Carlyle had no toleration. Religion, if not honest, was a horror to him. Those alone he thought had any right to teach Christianity who had no doubts about its truth. Those who were uncertain ought to choose some other profession, and if compelled to speak should show their colours faithfully. Thirlwall, who

discharged his functions as a Macready, he never blamed to me; but he would have liked him better could he have seen him at some other employment. The Essayists and Reviewers, the *Septem contra Christum*, were in people's mouths when my intimacy with Carlyle began. They did not please him. He considered that in continuing to be clergymen they were playing tricks with their consciences. The Dean of Westminster he liked personally, almost loved him indeed, yet he could have wished him anywhere but where he was.

'There goes Stanley,' he said one day as we passed the Dean in the park, 'boring holes in the bottom of the Church of England!' Colenso's book came out soon after. I knew Colenso; we met him in one of our walks. He joined us, and talked of what he had done with some slight elation. 'Poor fellow!' said Carlyle, as he went away; 'he mistakes it for fame. He does not see that it is only an extended pillory that he is standing on.' I thought and think this judgment a harsh one. No one had been once more anxious than Carlyle for the 'Exodus.' No one had done more to bring it about than Colenso, or more bravely faced the storm which he had raised, or, I may add, more nobly vindicated, in later life, his general courage and honesty when he stood out to defend the Zulus in South Africa. Stanley spoke more truly, or more to his own and Colenso's honour, when he told the infuriated Convocation to its face, that the Bishop of Natal was the only English prelate whose name would be remembered in the next century. Partly, I believe, at my instance, Mrs. Carlyle invited Colenso to one of her tea-parties, but it was

evident that he suited her no better than her husband. I told her so, and had this note in reply:—

Oh, my dear Mr. Froude, I surely couldn't have looked so bored as that. I couldn't because I wasn't. I own to feeling rather antipathetic to that anomalous bishop. A man arrived at the years of discretion wearing an absurd little black silk apron, disturbs my artistic feelings to begin with. Then consider whom I am descended from, the woman who when King James offered to make her husband a bishop if she would persuade him to return to his country and be a peaceable subject, held up her apron and answered, '*I would rather kepp his head in there.*' Add to all this that I strongly believe with a German friend of mine, that it is *the mixing up of things* which is *the Great Bad!* and that this particular bishop mixes up a black silk apron with arithmetical confutation of the Bible, and you will allow that I have better reason than a woman usually has for first impressions, why I should not *take to* Colenso. But I was really not bored that day. *You* came with him; *you* were there; and, without meaning to say anything pretty (which is far from my line), I am always so pleased to see you, that were you to come accompanied by the—the—*first gentleman in England*, I should rather than that you didn't come at all.

Literature was another subject on which Carlyle often talked with me. In his Craigenputtock Essays he had spoken of literature as the highest of human occupations, as the modern priesthood, &c., and so to the last he thought of it when it was the employment of men whom nature had furnished gloriously for that special task, like Goethe and Schiller. But for the writing function in the existing generation of Englishmen he had nothing but contempt. A 'man of letters,' a man who had taken to literature as a means of living, was generally some one who had gone into it because he was unfit for better work,

because he was too vain or too self-willed to travel along the beaten highways, and his writings, unless he was one of a million, began and ended in nothing. Life was action, not talk. The speech, the book, the review or newspaper article was so much force expended—force lost to practical usefulness. When a man had *uttered* his thoughts, still more when he was always uttering them, he no longer even attempted to translate them into act. He said once to me that England had produced her greatest men before she began to have a literature at all. Those Barons who signed their charter by dipping the points of their steel gauntlets in the ink, had more *virtue*, *manhood*, practical force and wisdom than any of their successors, and when the present disintegration had done its work, and healthy organic tissue began to form again, tongues would not clatter as they did now. Those only would speak who had call to speak. Even the Sunday sermons would cease to be necessary. A man was never made wiser or better by talking or being talked to. He was made better by being trained in habits of industry, by being enabled to *do* good useful work and earn an honest living by it. His excuse for his own life was that there had been no alternative. Sometimes he spoke of his writings as having a certain value; generally, however, as if they had little, and now and then as if they had none. 'If there be one thing,' he said, 'for which I have no special talent, it is literature. If I had been taught to *do* the simplest useful thing, I should have been a better and happier man. All that I can say for myself is, that I have done my best.' A strange judgment to come from a man who has

exerted so vast an influence by writing alone. Yet in a sense it was true. If literature means the expression by thought or emotion, or the representation of facts in completely beautiful *form*, Carlyle *was* inadequately gifted for it. But his function was not to please, but to instruct. Of all human writings, those which perhaps have produced the deepest effect on the history of the world have been St. Paul's Epistles. What Carlyle had he had in common with St. Paul: extraordinary intellectual insight, extraordinary sincerity, extraordinary resolution to speak out the truth as he perceived it, as if driven on by some impelling internal necessity. He and St. Paul—I know not of whom else the same thing could be said—wrote as if they were pregnant with some world-important idea, of which they were labouring to be delivered, and the effect is the more striking from the abruptness and want of artifice in the utterance. Whether Carlyle would have been happier, more useful, had he been otherwise occupied, I cannot say. He had a fine aptitude for all kinds of business. In any practical problem, whether of politics or private life, he had his finger always, as if by instinct, on the point upon which the issue would turn. Arbitrary as his temperament was, he could, if occasion rose, be prudent, forbearing, dexterous, adroit. He would have risen to greatness in any profession which he had chosen, but in such a world as ours he must have submitted, in rising, to the '*half-sincerities*,' which are the condition of success. We should have lost the Carlyle that we know. It is not certain that we should have gained an equivalent of him.

This is the sort of thing which I used daily to hear from Carlyle. His talk was not always, of course, on such grave matters. He was full of stories, anecdotes of his early life, or of people that he had known.

For more than four years after our walks began, he was still engaged with 'Frederick.' He spoke freely of what was uppermost in his mind, and many scenes in the history were rehearsed to me before they appeared, Voltaire, Maupertuis, Chatham, Wolfe being brought up as living figures. He never helped himself with gestures, but his voice was as flexible as if he had been trained for the stage. He was never tedious, but dropped out picture after picture in inimitable finished sentences. He was so quiet, so unexaggerative, so well-humoured in these private conversations, that I could scarcely believe he was the same person whom I used to hear declaim in the Pamphlet time. Now and then, if he met an acquaintance who might say a foolish thing, there would come an angry sputter or two; but he was generally so patient, so forbearing, that I thought age had softened him, and I said so one day to Mrs. Carlyle. She laughed and told him of it. 'I wish,' she said, 'Froude had seen you an hour or two after you seemed to him so lamblike.' But I was relating what he was as I knew him, and as I always found him from first to last.

To go on with the story:—

Through the winter of 1862-3 Mrs. Carlyle seemed tolerably well. The weather was warm. She had no serious cold. She was very feeble, and lay chiefly on the sofa, but she contrived to prevent Carlyle from

being anxious about her. He worked without respite, rode, except on walking days, chiefly late in the afternoon, in the dark in the winter months, about the environs of London; and the roaring of the suburban trains and the gleam of the green and crimson signal lamps were wildly impressive to him. On his return he would lie down in his dressing gown by the drawing-room fire, smoking up the chimney, while she would amuse him with accounts of her daily visitors. She was a perfect artist, and could carve a literary vignette out of the commonest materials. These were his happiest hours, and his only mental refreshment. In November 1862, Lord Ashburton fell ill at Paris, and there were fears for his life. 'His death,' Carlyle said, 'would be a heavy loss and sorrow to us, a black consummation of what there has already been.' But the alarm passed off for the time. 'We are both of us,' he reported at the end of December, 'what we call well; indeed, for my own part, I am really in full average case, as if I had got little or no permanent damage from this hideous pfluister of a book, which I can hope is now looking towards its finis. I have done the battle of Rossbach (Satan thank it!). Battle of Leuthen, siege of Olmütz lie in the rough (not very bad, I hope). After that there is only Hochkirch. Rigorous abridgment after that. One short book, I hope, will then end the Seven Years' War; and then there is one other. After that, home, like the stick of a rocket.'

Age so far was dealing kindly with him. There was no falling off in bodily strength. His eyes were failing slightly, but they lasted out his life. His right hand had begun to shake a little, and this unfortu-

nately was to develop till he was eventually disabled from writing; but as yet about himself there was nothing to give him serious uneasiness. A misfortune, however, was hanging over him of another kind, which threatened to upset the habits of his life. All his days he had been a fearless rider. He had a loose seat and a careless hand, but he had come to no misfortune, owing, he thought, to the good sense of his horse, which was much superior to that of most of his biped acquaintances. Fritz, even Fritz, was now to misbehave.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: February 13, 1863.

I have been very unlucky, or my excellent old horse was, twice over last week, Tuesday and Friday. Think as you read. I had let the old fellow rest on Monday. Tuesday I tumbled out, and finding rain, snatched my mackintosh cloak and got away. Fritz very lively; wind so loud that, being then in crisis of interior, I resolved to go at walk. Till the Marble Arch, Hyde Park, we did very well, but the wind being right ahead, and mackintosh given to rattle, the old scoundrel determined on a caper; my hat blew off me; hands under the mackintosh. A labourer picked up the hat, tried to wipe some of the mud off it, Fritz prancing all the while. I had no coppers in my pocket, drew out my purse to give sixpence to the man, crushed on the hat, and galloped home. At night I discovered that I had no purse. In the tempest of rattling and prancing and embarrassed hurrying, I had stuck it, not into my pocket again, but past my pocket, and it was gone, twelve or ten shillings in it. That was misadventure first, *Nichts zu bedeuten* in comparison. Till Friday I daily rode the old scoundrel. On Friday, without the least warning or cause, he came smash down, lying flat on the ground for one quarter of an instant, had done me no mischief at all, sprang up and trotted half a mile (greatly ashamed of himself, I suppose); when

looking over his shoulder I saw the blood streaming over his hoof, drew bridle, dismounted, found the knees quite smashed, and except slowly home have ridden no more since. Jane will not hear of my ever riding him again, nor in real truth is it proper. *Finis* therefore in that department. I have been extremely sorry for my poor old fourfooted friend. *Ganz treu* he constantly and wonderfully was; and now, what to do with myself! or how to dispose of poor Fritz. Of course I can sell him; have him knocked down at Tattersall's for a 10*l.* or an old song; and then (as he goes delirious under violent usage and is frightened for running swift in harness) get the poor creature scourged to death in a horrible way, after all the 20,000 faithful miles he has carried me, and the wild puddles and lonely dark times we have had together. I cannot bear to think of that. He is a strong healthy horse, loyal and peaceable and *wise* as horse ever was.

Fritz was sold for nine pounds. What became of him further I never heard. Lady Ashburton supplied his place with another, equally good and almost with Fritz's intellect. Life went on as before after this interruption, and leaves little to record. On April 29 he writes:—

I had to go yesterday to Dickens's Reading, 8 p.m., Hanover Rooms, to the complete upsetting of my evening habitudes and spiritual composure. Dickens does do it capitally, such as *it* is; acts better than any Macready in the world; a whole tragic, comic, heroic *theatre* visible, performing under one *hat*, and keeping us laughing—in a sorry way, some of us thought—the whole night. He is a good creature, too, and makes fifty or sixty pounds by each of these readings.'

From dinner parties he had almost wholly withdrawn, but in the same letter he mentions one to which he had been tempted by a new acquaintance, who grew

afterwards into a dear and justly valued friend, Miss Davenport Bromley. He admired Miss Bromley from the first, for her light, airy ways, and compared her to a 'flight of larks.'

Summer came, and hot weather; he descended from his garret to the awning in the garden again. By August he was tired, 'Frederick' spinning out beyond expectation, and he and Mrs. Carlyle went for a fortnight to the Grange. Lord Ashburton seemed to have recovered, but was very delicate. There was no party, only Venables, the guest of all others whom Carlyle best liked to meet. The visit was a happy one, a gleam of pure sunshine before the terrible calamity which was now impending.

One evening, after their return, Mrs. Carlyle had gone to call on a cousin at the post office in St. Martin's Lane. She had come away, and was trying to reach an omnibus, when she was thrown by a cab on the kerbstone. Her right arm being disabled by neuralgia, she was unable to break her fall. The sinews of one thigh were sprained and lacerated, and she was brought home in a fly in dreadful pain. She knew that Carlyle would be expecting her. Her chief anxiety, she told me, was to get into the house without his knowledge, to spare him agitation. For herself, she could not move. She stopped at the door of Mr. Larkin, who lived in the adjoining house in Cheyne Row, and asked him to help her. The sound of the wheels and the noise of voices reached Carlyle in the drawing-room. He rushed down, and he and Mr. Larkin together bore her up the stairs, and laid her on her bed. There she remained, in an agony which, experienced in pain as she was, exceeded the

worst that she had known. Carlyle was not allowed to know how seriously she had been injured. The doctor and she both agreed to conceal it from him, and during those first days a small incident happened, which she herself described to me, showing the distracting want of perception which sometimes characterised him—a want of perception, not a want of feeling, for no one could have felt more tenderly. The nerves and muscles were completely disabled on the side on which she had fallen, and one effect was that the under jaw had dropped, and that she could not close it. Carlyle always disliked an open mouth; he thought it a sign of foolishness. One morning, when the pain was at its worst, he came into her room, and stood looking at her, leaning on the mantel-piece. 'Jane,' he said presently, 'ye had better shut your mouth.' She tried to tell him that she could not. 'Jane,' he began again,' 'ye'll find yourself in a more compact and pious frame of mind, if ye shut your mouth.' In old-fashioned and, in him, perfectly sincere phraseology he told her that she ought to be thankful that the accident was no worse. Mrs. Carlyle hated cant as heartily as he, and to her, in her sore state of mind and body, such words had a flavour of cant in them. True herself as steel, she would not bear it. 'Thankful!' she said to him; 'thankful for what? for having been thrown down in the street when I had gone on an errand of charity? for being disabled, crushed, made to suffer in this way? I am not thankful, and I will not say that I am.' He left her, saying he was sorry to see her so rebellious. We can hardly wonder after this that he had to report sadly to his brother: 'She speaks little to me,

and does not accept me as a sick nurse, which, truly, I had never any talent to be.'

Of course he did not know at first her real condition. She had such indomitable courage that she persuaded him that she was actually better off since she had become helpless than 'when she had been struggling to go out daily and returned done up, with her joints like to fall in pieces.' For a month she could not move—at the end of it she was able to struggle to her feet and crawl occasionally into the adjoining room. Carlyle was blind. Seven weeks after the accident he could write: 'She actually sleeps better, eats better, and is cheerfuller than formerly. For perhaps three weeks past she has been hitching about with a stick. She can walk too, but slowly without stick. In short she is doing well enough—as indeed am I, and have need to be.'

He had need to be, for he had just discovered that he could not end with 'Frederick' like a rocket-stick, but that there must be a new volume; and for his sake, and knowing how the truth, if he was aware of it, would agitate him, with splendid heroism she had forced herself prematurely to her feet again, the mental resolution conquering the weakness of the body. She even received visitors again, and in the middle of November, I and my own wife once more spent an evening there.[1] But it was the last exertion which she was able to make. The same night there came on neuralgic pain—rather torture than pain—of which the doctor could give no explanation. 'A mere cold,' he said, 'no cause for alarm;' but the weeks went on and there was no abatement, still pain in every

[1] *Letters and Memorials*, vol. iii. p. 178.

muscle, misery in every nerve, no sleep, no rest from suffering night or day—save in faint misleading intervals—and Carlyle knew at last how it was with her, and had to go on with his work as he could.

'We are in great trouble,' he wrote on the 29th of December, in one of those intervals, 'trouble, anxiety, and confusion. Poor Jane's state is such as to fill us with the saddest thoughts. She does not gather strength—how can she! She is quieter in regard to pain. The neuralgia and other torments have sensibly abated, not ceased. She also eats daily a little—that is one clearly good symptom. But her state is one of weakness, utter restlessness, depression, and misery, such a scene as I never was in before. If she could only get a little sleep, but she cannot hitherto. To-night, by Barnes's advice and her own reluctant consent, she is to try morphine again. God of His mercy grant that it may prosper! There has been for ten days a complete cessation of all druggings and opiate abominations. They did her a great deal of mischief instead of any good. . . I still try to hope and believe that my poor little woman *is* a little thought better, but it is miserable to see how low and wretched she is, and under what wearing pain she passes her sleepless nights and days. In health I am myself as well as usual, which surely is a blessing. I keep busy too in all available moments. Work *done* is the one consolation left me.'

Other remedies failing, the last chance was in change and sea air. Dr. Blakeston, an accomplished physician at St. Leonards, whose wife was an old friend of Mrs. Carlyle, offered to receive her as a guest. She was taken thither in a 'sick carriage,' in construction and appearance something like a hearse, in the beginning of March. Carlyle attended her down, left her, with her cousin Maggie Welsh, in the Blakestons' affectionate hands, and himself returned to his solitary

home and task. There, in Hades as he called it, he sate toiling on, watching for the daily bulletins, now worse, now a little better, his own letters full of passionate grief and impatience with intruders, who came with the kindest purpose to enquire, but just then could better have been spared.

'I was left well alone last night,' he wrote on the 15th of March, 'and sate at least silent in my gloom. On Sunday came G. to enquire for Mrs. C. His enquiry an offence to me. I instantly walked him out, but had to go talking with him, mere *fire and brimstone* upon suet dumpling, progress of the species, &c. &c., all the way to Hyde Park. What does the foolish ball of tallow want with me?'

Sorrows did not come single. Ten days later came news that Lord Ashburton was dead, the dearest friend that had been left to him. As an evidence of regard Lord A. had left him 2,000*l.*, or rather had not left it, but had desired that it should be given to him, that there might be no deduction for legacy duty. It was a small matter at such a moment that there appeared in the 'Saturday Review' 'an extremely contemptible notice, hostile if the dirty puppy dared,' on the last published volumes of 'Frederick.' This did not even vex him, 'was not worth a snuff of tobacco; only he thought it was a pity that Venables just then should have allowed the book to fall into unworthy hands. He wrote to his wife daily—a few words to satisfy her that he was well. At length the absence from her became unbearable. He took a house at St. Leonards, to which she could be removed; and, leaving Cheyne Row to the care of Mr. Larkin, he went down, with his work, to join her. Most things in this world have their sunny side—the planet

itself first, and then the fortunes of its occupants. His grief and anxiety had convinced Mrs. Carlyle of her husband's real love for her, which she had long doubted. But that was all, for her sufferings were of a kind which few human frames could bear without sinking under them. Carlyle was patient and tender; all was done for her which care and love could provide; she had not wholly lost her strength or energy; but the pain and sleeplessness continued week after week without sign of abating. They remained at St. Leonards till the middle of July, when desperate, after twelve nights absolutely without sleep of any kind, she rallied her force, rose, and went off, under John Carlyle's charge, through London to Annandale, there to shake off the horrible enchantment or else to die.

It was on the eve of her birthday that she made her flight. No one was more absolutely free than she was from superstition, but times and seasons were associated with human feelings; she might either end her life altogether or receive a fresh lease of it. Carlyle remained at St. Leonards, to gather his books and papers together. She was to go first to his sister, Mrs. Austin, at the Gill. 'Oh what a birthday is this for thee!' he cried after her, 'flying from the tormentor, panting like the hunted doe with all the hounds of the pit in chase. Poor Mary will do her very best and sisterliest for you; a kinder soul is not on earth.' The violent revulsion, strange to say, for a time succeeded. The journey did not hurt her. She recovered sleep a little, strength a little. Slowly, very slowly and with many relapses, she rallied into a more natural state, first at the Gill and afterwards with the

Russells in Nithsdale.[1] Carlyle could not follow except with his heart, but the thoughts which he could spare from his work were given to what he would do for her if she was ever restored to him alive.

There was to be no more hiring of carriages, no more omnibuses. She was henceforth to have a brougham of her own. Her room in Cheyne Row in which she had so suffered, was re-papered, re-arranged, with the kind help of Miss Bromley, that she might be surrounded with objects unassociated with the past.

Here are a series of extracts from the letters which he wrote to her :—

Chelsea: July 29, 1864.

People do not help me much. Oh darling, when will you come back and protect me? God above will have arranged that for both of us, and it will be His will not ours that can rule it. My thoughts are a prayer for my poor little life-partner who has fallen lame beside me after travelling so many steep and thorny ways. I will stop this, lest I fall to crying altogether.

August 1.

Worked too late yesterday. Walked out for exercise at seven p.m. Wild, windy sky. Streets—thank God!—nearly empty; rain threatening. My walk was gloomy, *sad* as death, but not provoking, not so miserable as many. Gloom, sorrow; but instead of rage—suppressed rage as too often—pious grief, heavy but blessed rather. I read till midnight, then out again, solitary as a ghost, and to bed about one. I see nobody, wish to see nobody.

August 2.

I am out of sorts; no work hardly; and run about as miserable as my worst enemy could wish; and my poor little friend of friends, she has fallen wounded to the ground and

[1] For the Russells and all they did for Mrs. Carlyle, see *Letters and Memorials*, vol. iii. p. 204 *et seq.*

I am alone—alone! My spirits are quite sunk; my hand is quite out. Postman Bullock wants me to get his son promoted. Can't I? Somebody else wants 50*l.* till he prove the Bible out of square. Another requests me to induct him into literature. Another to say how he can save mankind, which is much his wish, &c.

August 3.

Your poor nervous system ruined, not by those late months only, but by long years of more or less the like! Oh, you have had a hard life! I, too, not a soft one: but yours beside me! Alas! alas! I am better than yesterday, still not quite up to par. The noises have considerably increased about me, but I care much less about them in general. Night always brings her coolness, her silence, which is an infinite solace to us, body and soul. Nothing of blockhead mankind's procedure seems madder and even more condemnable to me than this of their brutish bedlamitish creation of needless noises.

August 4.

What a blessed course of religious industry is that of Scotland, to guard against letters coming or going so many days every month. The seventh day, fourth part of a lunation; that is the real fact it all rests on; and such a hubbub made of it by the vile flunkey souls who call themselves special worshippers of the Most High. Mumbo Jumbo on the coast of Guinea almost seems a shade more respectable.

I was absent from London during the summer. I had heard that the Carlyles had left St. Leonards and that she was in Scotland, and I wrote to him under the impression that she must be recovering. He answered that I had been *far* too hopeful.

Chelsea: August 6.

The accounts have mostly been bad; but for two days past seem (to myself) to indicate something of real improvement. I am always very sanguine in the matter; but get the saddest rebukes, as you see. God only knows what is to

become of it all. But I keep as busy as the Fates will allow, and in that find the summary of any consolation that remains to me. My progress is, as it has always been, frightfully slow; but, if I live a few months, I always think I shall get the accursed millstone honourably sawed from my neck, and once more revisit the daylight and the dry land, and see better what steps are to be taken. I have no company here but my horse. Indeed I have mainly consorted with my horse for eight years back—and he, the staff of my life otherwise, is better company than any I could get at present in these latitudes—an honest creature that is always candid with me and rationally useful in a small way, which so few are. Wish me well and return, the sooner the better. How well I remember the last night you and Mrs. Froude were here! It was the last sight I had of my poor little life-companion still afoot by my side, cheerily footing the rough ways along with me, not overwhelmed in wild deluges of misery as now. *At spes infracta!* This is the Place of Hope.—Yours ever, T. C.

To her his letters continued constant, his spirits varying with her accounts of herself, but, as he had said to me, always trying to be sanguine.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Chelsea: August 11.

Oh, what a deliverance to the loaded heart of me—one ought not to be so desperate, but I was too early awake again, and flesh is weak. Oh, I am so sad, sad, sad, but have often been more miserable far. The sorrow has *forgiveness* in it, reconciliation to all men and things, especially to all men, not secret rage and vain struggle, as too often. Oh, do but get better, my own Schatz. We shall have good days yet, please God.

August 18.

May I really think the vengeful Furies are abating, going gradually to *their* homes—and that my poor little Eurydice will come back again and make me rich. God of His

mercy grant it to me and you. Amen! What a humiliated, broken-down, poor cheepy wretch I am! Condemned to dwell among the pots and live upon unclean blockheadism, and hug foul creatures to my bosom, coaxing them to tell me what they know, these long years past, till I feel *myself* to have become foul and blockheadish. On, on, to get it pitched away from me into the bottomless Pool!

August 25.

The girls are raging and scrubbing; the curtains all on the ropes in the garden. Cat, with miniature black likeness of herself, contemplatively wandering among the skirts of them. Not a mouse stirring! Oh dear! I wish my Goody was back, but I won't be impatient. Oh, no, no; as long as I hear of her getting inch by inch into her old self again. The heavens truly are merciful and gracious to me, though they load my back rather sore.

August 29–30.

The blessed silence of Sabbath. Nobody loves his Sabbath as I do. There is something quite divine to me in that cessation of barrel organs, pianos, tumults, and jumblings. I easily do a better day's work than on any other day of the seven; and, left alone, have a solemn kind of sadness, a gloom of mind which, though heavy to bear, is not unallied with sacredness and blessedness. . . . Poor little soul! You are the helm, intellect of the house. Nobody else has the least skill in steering. My poor scissors, for example, you would find them in perhaps five minutes. Nobody else I think will in five months. 'Nowhere to be found, sir.' 'Can't find them,' say they, as so many rabbits or blue-bottle flies might.

August 31.[1]

It is the waest and forlornest-looking thing, like to make me cry outright. Indeed, I often feel, if I could sit down and *greet* for a whole day it would be an infinite relief to me, but one's eyes grow dry. What a quantity of *greeting*, too, one used to do in the beginning of life. . . . I am but low-

[1] Describing the re-arrangement of her bedroom.

spirited, you see. Want of *potatoes*, I am ashamed to say, is the source of everything, and I will give up.

September 8–9.

Oh, how I wish I had you here again, ill or not ill. We will try to bear the yoke together, and the sight of your face will do my sick heart good. . . . Your account would have made me quite glad again, had not my spirits been otherwise below par. Want of potatoes, want of regular bodily health, nay—it must be admitted—I am myself too irregular with no Goody near me. If I were but regular! There will be nothing for it but that you come home and regulate.

September 20.

You are evidently suffering much. I cannot help you at all. The only thing I can do is to wish for you here again, such as you are; quiet at your own chimney-nook where it would be new life to me to see you sitting, never so lame if not quite too miserable and not in pain *un*endurable. Endurable or not, we two, and not any other body, are the natural bearers of it. . . . Of myself there is nothing to record, but a gallop of excellence yesterday, an evening to myself altogether, almost incapable, not quite, and a walk under the shining skies between twelve and one a.m. The weather is as beautiful as it can be. Silent strangely when the infernal cockneyisms sink away—so silent, brilliant, sad, that I was like to greet looking at it.

September 22.

I had the pain of *excluding* poor Farie last night. I knew his rap and indeed was peremptory before that. 'Nobody!' But Farie really wishes well to both of us. In my loneliness here it often seems to me as if there was nothing but nasty organ-grinding, misguided, hostile, savage, or indifferent people round me from shore to shore; and Farie's withdrawing footstep had a kind of sadness.

September 27.

It is no wonder, as Jean says, that you are 'blackbased'[1] at such a journey lying ahead, but the real likelihood is it

[1] Abased.—It was a phrase of my mother's.—T. C.

will pass without essential damage to you. You will get to me on Saturday morning, and find me at least, and what home we have on this vexed earth, true to one another while we stay here. The house is quite ready. I shall not be long with my book now. . . . On Sunday in Belgrave Square I met the Dean of Westminster; innocent heterodox soul, *blasé* on toast and water, coming on with his neat black-eyed little Scotch wife. Oh, what inquiries! Really very innocent people, and really interested in you.

September 29.

Oh, my suffering little Jeannie! Not a wink of real sleep again for you. I read (your letter) with that kind of heart you may suppose in the bright beautiful morning; even Margaretta Terrace looking wholesome and kind, while for poor us there is nothing but restless pain and chagrin. And yet, dearest, there is something in your note[1] which is welcomer to me than anything I have yet had—a sound of *piety*, of devout humiliation and gentle hope and submission to the Highest, which affects me much and has been a great comfort to me. Yes, poor darling! This was wanted. Proud stoicism you never failed in, nor do I want you to abate of it. But there is something beyond of which I believe you to have had too little. It softens the angry heart and is far from weakening it—nay, is the final strength of it, the fountain and nourishment of all real strength. Come home to your own poor nest again. That is a good change, and clearly the best of all. Gird your soul heroically together, and let me see you on Saturday by my side again, for weal or woe. We have had a great deal of hard travelling together, we will not break down yet, please God. How to thank Dr. and Mrs. Russell for what they have done for you, much more how to repay them, beats all my ingenuity.

And so Mrs. Carlyle came back to Cheyne Row, from which she had been carried six months before as in a hearse, expecting to see it no more. She reappeared in her old circle, weak, shattered, her body

[1] *Letters and Memorials*, vol. iii. p. 211.

worn to a shadow, but with her spirit bright as ever—brighter perhaps; for Carlyle's tenderness in her illness had convinced her that he really cared for her, and the sunset of her married life recovered something of the colours of its morning. He, too sanguine always, persuaded himself that her disorder was now worn out, and that she was on the way to a perfect restoration. She, I think, was under no such illusion. There was a gentle smile in her face, if one ever spoke of it, which showed her incredulity. But from London she took no hurt. She seemed rather to gain strength than to lose it. To her friends she was as risen from the dead, and it was a pleasure to her to see how dear she was to them and with what eagerness they pressed forward to be of use. No one could care *a little* for Mrs. Carlyle, and the singular nature of her illness added to the interest which was felt for her. She required new milk in the morning. A supply was sent in daily, fresh from the Rector's cow. The brougham was bought, and she had a childlike pride in it, as her husband's present. 'Strange and precious to look back upon,' he says, 'those last eighteen months as of a second youth—almost a second childhood, with the wisdom and graces of old age, which by Heaven's great mercy were conceded to her and me.'

'Frederick' was finished in January, the last of Carlyle's great works, the last and grandest of them. 'The dreary task, and the sorrows and obstructions attending it,' 'a magazine of despairs, impossibilities, and ghastly difficulties never known but to himself, and by himself never to be forgotten,' all was over, 'locked away and the key turned on it.' 'It nearly killed me' [he says in his journal], 'it, and my poor

Jane's dreadful illness, now happily over. No sympathy could be found on earth for those horrid struggles of twelve years, nor happily was any needed. On Sunday evening in the end of January (1865) I walked out, with the multiplex feeling—joy not very prominent in it, but a kind of solemn thankfulness traceable, that I had written the last sentence of that unutterable book, and, contrary to many forebodings in bad hours, had actually got done with it for ever.'

'Frederick' was translated instantly into German, and in Germany, where the conditions were better known in which Carlyle had found his materials, there was the warmest appreciation of what he had done. The sharpest scrutiny only served to show how accurate was the workmanship. Few people anywhere in Europe dreamt twenty years ago of the position which Germany, and Prussia at the head of it, were so soon to occupy. Yet Carlyle's book seemed to have been composed in conscious anticipation of what was coming. He had given a voice to the national feeling. He had brought up as it were from the dead the creator of the Prussian monarchy, and had replaced him among his people as a living and breathing man. He had cleared the air for the impending revolution, and Europe, when it came, could see how the seed had grown which had expanded into the German Empire.

In England it was at once admitted that a splendid addition had been made to the national literature. The book contained, if nothing else, a gallery of historical figures executed with a skill which placed Carlyle at the head of literary portrait painters. The English mind remains insular and is hard to interest

supremely in any history but its own. The tone of 'Frederick' nowhere harmonized with popular sentiment among us, and every page contained something to offend. Yet even in England it was better received on its first appearance than any of Carlyle's other works had been, and it gave solidity and massiveness to his already brilliant fame. No critic, after the completion of 'Frederick,' challenged Carlyle's right to a place beside the greatest of English authors, past or present.

He had sorely tried America; but America forgave his sarcasms—forgot the 'smoky chimney,' forgot the 'Iliad in a Nutshell,' and was cordially and enthusiastically admiring. Emerson sent out a paragraph, which went the round of the Union, that '"Frederick" was the wittiest book that was ever written; a book that one would think the English people would rise up in mass and thank the author for by cordial acclamation, and signify, by crowning him with oak leaves, their joy that such a head existed among them;' 'while sympathising and much-reading America would make a new treaty, or send a Minister Extraordinary to offer congratulations of honouring delight to England in acknowledgment of this donation.' A rather sanguine expectation on Emerson's part! England has ceased to stone or burn her prophets, but she does not yet make them the subject of international treaties. She crowns with oak leaves her actors and her prima-donnas, her politicians, who are to-day her idols, and to-morrow will find none so poor to do them reverence; to wise men she is contented to pay more moderate homage, and leaves the final decorating work to time and future generations.

CHAPTER XXVII.

A.D. 1865–6. ÆT. 70–71.

'Frederick' completed—Summer in Annandale—Mrs. Carlyle in Nithsdale—Visit to Linlathen—Thomas Erskine—The Edinburgh Rectorship—Feelings in Cheyne Row about it—Ruskin's 'Ethics of the Dust.'

THE last proofs of 'Frederick' being corrected and dismissed, the Carlyles went down, in the spring of 1865, to stay with Lady Ashburton at a seaside cottage at Seaton, in Devonshire. They spent a few quiet weeks there, and then went home again—Carlyle, so he says, to 'sink and sink into ever new depths of stupefaction and dark misery of body and mind.' He was a restless spirit. When busy, he complained that his work was killing him; when he was idle, his mind preyed upon itself. Perhaps, as was generally the case, he exaggerated his own discomforts. Long before he had told his family, when he had terrified them with his accounts of himself, that they ought to know that when he cried Murder he was not always being killed. When his soul seemed all black, the darkness only broken by lightnings, he was aware that sometimes it was only a want of potatoes. Still, in the exhaustion which followed on long exertion he was always wildly humoured. About May he found that he wanted fresh change. Some-

thing was amiss with Mrs. Carlyle's right arm, so that she had lost the use of it for writing. She seemed well otherwise, however; she had no objection to being left alone, and he set off for Annandale, where he had not been for three years, 'Poor old Scotland!' he said. 'It almost made me greet when I saw it again, and the first sound of a Scotch guard, and his broad accent, was strange and affecting to me.' His wife and he had grown but 'a feckless pair of bodies,' 'a pair of miserable creatures,' but they would not 'tine heart'; and at the house of his sister, Mrs. Austin, he found the most careful preparations for his comfort—'new pipes,' 'new towels,' 'new, excellent potatoes,' 'a new sofa to lie down upon after his rides,' everything that his heart could wish for.

Not a sound all night at the Gill, he wrote, after his arrival, except, at stated times, the grinding, brief clash of the railway, which, if I hear it at all, is a lash or loud crack of the *Mammon whip*, going on at present over all the earth, on the enslaved backs of men; I alone enfranchised from it, nothing to do but hear it savagely clashing, breaking God Almighty's silence in that fatal or tragic manner, saying —not to me—'Ye accursed slaves!'

Mrs. Carlyle made shift to write to him with the hand which was left to her; lively as ever, careful, for his sake, to take her misfortunes lightly. He, on his part, was admiringly grateful.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

The Gill, June 9.

Thanks for the struggle you have made to get me a word of authentic tidings sent. I can read perfectly your poor

little left-hand lessons, and wonder at the progress you have made. Don't be impious, however. Your poor right hand will be restored to you, please God; and we may depend upon it, neither the coming nor the going in such cases goes by the rule of caprice. Alas! what a time we have all got into! I finished last night the dullest thick book, long-winded, though intelligent, of Lyell; and the tendency of it, very impotent, was, upon the whole, to prove that we are much the same as the apes; that Adam was probably no other than a fortunate ourang-outang who succeeded in rising in the world. May the Lord confound all such dreary insolences of loquacious blockheadism, entitling itself Science. Science, as the understanding of things worth knowing, was once a far different matter from this melancholy maundering and idle looking into the unknowable, and apparently the *not* worth knowing.

He had his horse with him—Fritz's successor, Lady Ashburton's present, whom he called Noggs. On Noggs's back he wandered round the old neighbourhood, which he had first known as a schoolboy, and then as usher.

Poor old Annan! he wrote. There the old houses stood, a bleared evening sun shining as if in anger on them; but the disagreeable, mostly paltry living creatures who used to vex me in those days were all gone. The old Academy House! what a considerable stride to the New Academy I have been in for some time, and am thinking soon to quit. Good night, ye of the paltry type—ye of the lovely, too. Good, and good only, be with you all! Noggs and I, after these reflections, started at a mighty pace for Cummertrees, wind howling direct in our faces, and were there just as a luggage train was passing, amid tempests of muddy smoke, with a shrieking storm of discord, which Noggs could not but pause to watch the passage of, with a mixture of wonder and abhorrence. The waving of the woods about Kelhead, grandly soughing in the windy sunset, soon hushed the mind of both of us to a better tone, if not a much gladder.

Again :—

June–July, 1865.

My rides are very strange, in the mood so foreign as mine. Last night, 6 to 8 p.m., was a perfect whirlwind, as the day had been, though otherwise fresh and genial. I went for the first time by the Priest-side Sands. Noggs had some reluctance to put forth his speed in the new element: strong tempests on the right eye; on the left the far-off floods of Solway; Criffel and the mountains, with the foreground of flat sand, in parts white with salt, right ahead. But I made the dog go, and had really a very interesting gallop, as different from that of Rotten Row as could well be. 'Oh, rugged and all-supporting mother!' says Orestes, addressing the earth. One has now no other sermon in the world, not a mockery and a sham, but that of these telluric and celestial silences, broken by such winds as there may be.

So went Carlyle's summer at the Gill. She meanwhile, dispirited by her lamed hand, and doubtful of the future, resolved that she, too, would see Scotland once more before she died. Not guessing how ill all was with her about the heart, he wished her to join him at his sister's.

I am doing myself good in respect of health, he said, though still in a tremulous state of nerves, and altogether sombre and sad and vacant. My hand is given to shake. Alas! what is shaking to other states we know of? I am solitary as I wished to be, and do not object to the gloom and dispiritment, going down to the utterly dark. If they like to rest there, let them. The world has become in many parts hideous to me. Its highest high no longer looks very high to me; only my poor heart, strange to say, is not very much blunted by all it has got. In the depths of silent sadness, I feel as if there were still as much love in me—all gone to potential tears—as there was in my earliest day.

Mrs. Carlyle was proud of her husband; she honoured his character, she gloried in his fame, and

she was sure of his affection. But in her sick state she needed rest, and rest, when the dark spirit was on him, she could not find at his side. He had his sister with him; he had his brother James close at hand. To these kind kindred she might safely leave him; and she went on past Annan to the good Russells in Nithsdale, who had nursed her in the past year. Carlyle wished her only to do what would give her most pleasure. He went to see her at Thornhill, met her at Dumfries, was satisfied to know that she was in safe hands, and was blind to the rest.

There was in you [he wrote, after one of these meetings] such a geniality and light play of spirit, when you got into talk, as was quite surprising to me, and had a fine beauty in it, though very sorrowful. Courage! By-and-by we shall see the end of this long lane, as we have done of others, and all will be better than it now is.

His own life 'was the nearest approach to zero that any son of Adam could make.' He read 'his Boileau' lying on the grass, 'sauntered a minimum,' 'rode a maximum,' sometimes even began to think of work again, as if such idleness were disgraceful. For her, evidently, he was in no alarm at all. After her birthday, he paid a visit to his old friend, Mr. Spedding, at Mirehouse, near Keswick. Spedding himself (elder brother of James, the editor of 'Bacon') he thought one of the best men he had ever known. There were three 'beautiful young ladies,' Mr. Spedding's daughters. Mirehouse was beautiful, and so were the ways of it; 'everything nice and neat, dairy, cookery, lodging rooms. *Simplex munditiis* the real title of it, not to speak of Skiddaw and the finest mountains of the earth.' He must have enjoyed

himself indeed, when he could praise so heartily. 'My three days at Keswick,' he said when they were over, 'are as a small polished flagstone, which I am not sorry to have intercalated in the rough floor of boulders which my sojourn otherwise has been in these parts.'

To Mrs. Carlyle Nithsdale this time had been a failure. The sleeplessness came on again, and she fled back to Cheyne Row. 'Poor witch-hunted Goody,' he said; 'was there ever such a chase of the fiends?' Miss Bromley took charge of her at Folkestone, from which she was able to send a brighter account of herself. He, meanwhile, lingered on at his brother's at Scotsbrig.

I am the idlest and most contented of men, he said, would things but let me alone, and time stay still. The clearness of the air here, the old hill-tops and grassy silences —it is with a strange acquiescence that I fancy myself as bidding probably farewell to them for the last time. Annandale is gone out of me, lies all stark and dead, as I shall soon do, too. Why not?

The peaceable torpor did not last long. He was roused first into a burst of indignation by reading an 'insolent and vulgar' review upon Ruskin's 'Sesame and Lilies.' It was written by a man who professed attachment to Mrs. Carlyle. I need not name him; he is dead now, and cannot be hurt by reading Carlyle's description of him to her:

A dirtyish little pug, irredeemably imbedded in commonplace, and grown fat upon it, and prosperous to an unwholesome degree. Don't *you* return his love. Nasty creature! with no eye for the beautiful, and awefully interesting to himself.

In August Carlyle started on a round of visits—to Mr. Erskine at Linlathen, to Sir William Stirling at Keir, to Edinburgh, to Lord and Lady Lothian at Newbattle, and then again to Scotsbrig. At Linlathen as wherever he went, he was a most welcome guest; but he was slightly out of humour there.

The good old St. Thomas, he wrote, seemed to me sometimes to have grown more secular in these his last years; eats better, drinks ditto, and is more at ease in the world: very wearisome, and inclined to feel distressed and to be disputatious on his new theories about God when Sinner Thomas will have nothing to do with them.

Erskine was not conscious of a fall in favour, either for himself or his theories, and his own allusion to Carlyle's visit shows that the differences had not been much accentuated. He had hoped that Mrs. Carlyle would have come with her husband. As she could not, he wrote her an affectionate letter, in which some of the offending theories will perhaps be found.

To Jane Welsh Carlyle.

Linlathen: August 18, 1865.

Beloved Mrs. Carlyle,—I suppose you *could not* have come here, and yet it is with some sorrow that I accept this arrangement, as I scarcely expect to have another sight of your dear face on this earth. One might ask what good would come of it if I had. I can only answer that ever since I have known that face it has been a cordial to me to see it. I am happy to think that you are getting better, and recovering a little strength after that long suffering.

I have a paternal feeling towards you, a tender feeling, as for a child, though you may think I have no right to have such a feeling; and yet your last letter, which was most sweet to my heart, seemed to say that you almost expected such a feeling.

The way in which I should like to express that feeling would be by telling you things which I have myself found to be helpful and supporting in trouble and darkness and confusion; but the difficulty of saying the thing in the right way always stops both mouth and pen. I hope God will speak it to you in his own right way. There is an expression in the 28th Psalm that often comes to me: 'Be not silent unto me, lest I become like those that go down into the pit.' If there be anything that I have a perfect assurance of, it is this, that God is indeed a Father, and that His unchangeable purpose towards me, and you, and all, is to make us *right*; to train us into the capacity of a full sympathy with Himself, and thus to unite us to each other in righteous love. I require such a confidence, and I cling to it, in spite of manifold contradictions.

I am glad to see Mr. Carlyle so well, after passing through such a process. He sits under the same rowan tree that he sate under when here before, in accordance with his conservative fidelity. I have a fellow-feeling with him in many things, and love his singleness of heart and purpose more than I can express.

Ever yours, with true affection,

T. ERSKINE.

Carlyle, for his part, was happy to find himself under his brother's roof again at Scotsbrig.

The truth is [he wrote to his wife], I have nowhere been so comfortably lodged as here just now. Silence, sleep procurable; and, indeed, a kind of feeling that I am a little better really since getting home. All this, added to the loveliest skies I ever saw, clear as diamonds this day, and an earth lying white to the harvest, with monitions in it against human gloom—all this is here; but, as usual, it can only last for a day. My Edinburgh, Keir, &c., fortnight was not without profit, perhaps, though the interest it could have to me was only small; not a single loved face there. Ah me! so few anywhere at this date. The physiognomies, all Scotch, looked curious to me, the changed streets and businesses.

The horrors of the railway station called Waverley, where John often had me, are a thing to remember all one's life—perhaps the liveliest emblem of Tartarus this earth affords. Newbattle is fine of its kind, and finely Scotch. Nobody there but the two poor inmates[1] and a good-humoured painter, doing portrait of the lady. The lady took me out to walk, talked like a sad, serious, enquiring, and intelligent soul; the saddest, thin, kindly, anxious face you could anywhere see. The Marquis did not appear till luncheon; a truly beautiful young man, body and mind, weaker than ever, hands now shaking, eyes beginning to fail, but heart as lively as ever. We had a great deal of innocent, cheerfully reasonable talk, and I daresay my advent might be a kind of relief, like a tree in the steppe, in the melancholy monotony of such a life. Had you and my lady been fairly acquainted, she would have liked you well.

The summer ended, as summers do and summers will, and autumn saw the Carlyles together once more in their Chelsea home, which one of them was not again to leave alive. The great outward event of Carlyle's own life, Scotland's public recognition of him, was now lying close ahead. This his wife was to live to witness as her final happiness in this world. She seemed stronger, slept tolerably, drove about daily in her brougham; occasionally even dined out. Once I remember meeting her and Carlyle this autumn at the Dean of Westminster's, and walking home with him. Once they dined with me to meet Mr. Spedding of Mirehouse, Ruskin, and Dean Milman. Ruskin, I recollect, that night was particularly brilliant, and with her was a special favourite. She was recovering slightly the use of her right hand; she could again

[1] Lord Lothian had been already struck, in the midst of his brilliant promise, by the slow, creeping malady which eventually killed him.

write with it; and nothing visible on the surface indicated that danger was near.

I had been at Edinburgh, and had heard Gladstone make his great oration on Homer there, on retiring from office as Rector. It was a grand display. I never recognised before what oratory could do; the audience being kept for three hours in a state of electric tension, bursting every moment into applause. Nothing was said which seemed of moment when read deliberately afterwards; but the voice was like enchantment, and the street, when we left the building, was ringing with a prolongation of the cheers. Perhaps in all Britain there was not a man whose views on all subjects, in heaven and earth, less resembled Gladstone's than those of the man whom this same applauding multitude elected to take his place. The students too, perhaps, were ignorant how wide the contradiction was; but if they had been aware of it they need not have acted differently. Carlyle had been one of themselves. He had risen from among them—not by birth or favour, not on the ladder of any established profession, but only by the internal force that was in him—to the highest place as a modern man of letters. In 'Frederick' he had given the finish to his reputation; he stood now at the summit of his fame; and the Edinburgh students desired to mark their admiration in some signal way. He had been mentioned before, but he had declined to be nominated, for a party only were then in his favour.

On this occasion the students were unanimous, or nearly so. His own consent was all that was wanting, and the question lay before him whether, hating as he

did all public displays, he would accept a quasi-coronation from them.

On November 7, 1865, he wrote to his brother:—

> My Rectorate, it seems, is a thing settled, which by no means oversets my composure with joy! A young Edinburgh man came here two weeks ago to remind me that last time, in flatly refusing, I had partly promised for *this* if my work was done. I objected to the 'speech.' He declared it to be a thing they would dispense with. Well! if *so*! I concluded; but do not as yet see my way through that latter clause, which is the sore one. Indeed, I have yet heard *nothing* of official upon it, and did not even see the newspaper paragraph till yesterday. *Hat gar wenig zu bedeuten*, one way or the other.

Hat wenig zu bedeuten. So Carlyle might say—but it was *bedeutend* to him nevertheless, and still more so to his wife. It seemed strange to me, so strange as to be almost incredible, that the Rectorship of a Scotch University could be supposed to add anything to the position which Carlyle had made for himself. But there were peculiar circumstances which gave to this one special form of recognition an exceptional attractiveness. Carlyle's reputation was English, German, American—Scotch also—but Scotch only to a certain degree. There had always in Scotland been an opposition party; and if the prophet had some honour in his own country, it was less than in other places. At least some feeling of this kind existed in Cheyne Row, though it may have been partly fancy, and due to earlier associations. Carlyle's Edinburgh memories were almost all painful. His University days had been without distinction. They had been followed by dreary schoolmastering days at Kirkcaldy, and the scarcely less dreary years of private

tutoring in Edinburgh again. When Miss Welsh, of Haddington, announced that she was to be married to him, the unheard of *mésalliance* had been the scoff of Edinburgh society and of her father's and mother's connections there. It had been hoped after the marriage that some situation might have been found for him, and they had settled in Comely Bank with a view to it. All efforts failed, however, and nothing could be done. At Craigenputtock he laid the foundation of his reputation—but his applications for employment in Scotland had been still refused invariably, and sometimes contumeliously. London treated him, in 1831, as a person of importance; when he spent the winter following in Edinburgh he was coldly received there—received with a dislike which was only not contempt because it was qualified with fear. This was all past and gone, but he had always a feeling that Edinburgh had not treated him well. The Rectorship would be a public acknowledgment that his countrymen had been mistaken about him, and he had an innocent satisfaction in the thought of it. She, too, had a similar feeling. Among old friends of his family, who knew little about literature, there was still an impression that 'Jeannie Welsh had thrown herself away.' They would be forced to say now that 'Jeannie was right after all.' She laughed when she talked about it, and I could hardly believe that she was serious. But evidently both in him and her some consciousness of the kind was really working, and this perhaps more than anything else determined him to go through with a business which, in detail, was sure to be distressing to him.

Thus it was all settled. Carlyle was chosen Rector

of Edinburgh University, and was to be installed in the ensuing spring. The congratulations which poured in all the winter—especially from Mrs. C.'s Scotch kinsfolk—'amused' them. Even a speech had been promised, and so long as it was at a distance seemed not inexecutable.

The Rectorial office, he wrote on December 21 to his brother John, is beginning to promise to be a highly pacific one; and has already shifted itself to a corner of the mind where I seldom remember it, and never almost with anything of anxiety or displeasure. When the time for speaking approaches I shall have to bethink me a little, and be bothered and tumbled about for a week or so; but that done I hope essentially all will be done.

During the winter I saw much of him. He was, for *him*, in good spirits, lighter-hearted than I had ever known him. He would even admit occasionally that he was moderately well in health. Even on the public side of things he fancied that there were symptoms of a possibility of a better day coming. In Ruskin he had ever-increasing hope and confidence.

I have been reading (he says on the same day) a strange little Christmas book of Ruskin's, called 'Ethics of the Dust.' It is all about crystallography, and seems to be, or is, geologically well-informed and correct; but it twists symbolically in the strangest way all its geology into morality, theology, Egyptian mythology, with fiery cuts at political economy; pretending not to know whether the forces and destinies and behaviour of crystals are not very like those of a man! Wonderful to behold. The book is full of admirable talent, with such a faculty of expression in it, or of picturing out what is meant, as beats all living rivals.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A.D. 1866. ÆT. 71.

Preparations for the Rectorship—Journey to Edinburgh—Tyndall—The Installation—Carlyle's speech—Character of it—Effect upon the world—Cartoon in 'Punch'—Carlyle stays at Scotsbrig to recover—Intended tea-party in Cheyne Row—Sudden death of Mrs. Carlyle—John Forster—Funeral at Haddington—Letters from Erskine—Carlyle's answers.

THE time approached for the installation and the delivery of the speech in Edinburgh. Through the winter Carlyle had dismissed it from his mind as the drop of bitter in his cup; but it had now to be seriously faced. To read would have been handiest to him, but he determined to speak. A speech was not an essay. A speech written and delivered, or even written and learnt by heart was to him an imposture, or, at best, an insincerity. He did not seem to be anxious, but anxious he was, and painfully so. He had never spoken in public since the lecture days. He had experienced then that he could do it, and could do it eminently well if he had practised the art—but he had not practised. In private talk he had no living equal; words flowed like Niagara. But a private room among friends, and a hall crowded with strangers where he was to stand up alone under two thousand pairs of eyes, were things entirely different; and Carlyle,

with all his imperiousness and high scornful tones, was essentially shy—one of the shyest of men. He resolved, however, as his father used to say, to 'gar himself go through with the thing,' or at least to try. If he broke down, as he thought that he probably would, he was old and weak, and it could signify little. Still, he says that he 'was very miserable,' 'angry with himself for getting into such a coil of vanity,' provoked that a performance which, to a vulgar orator would be a pride and delight, should to him appear so dreadful. Mrs. Carlyle kept up his spirits, made fun of his fears, bantered him, encouraged him, herself at heart as much alarmed as he was, but conscious, too, of the ridiculous side of it. She had thought of going with him, as she had gone with him to his lectures, but her courage misgave her. Among the freaks of her imagination she fancied that he might fall into a fit, or drop down dead in the excitement. She had herself been conscious lately of curious sensations and sharp twinges, which might mean worse than she knew. A sudden shock might make an end of her also, 'and then there would be a scene.' There would be plenty of friends about him. Huxley was going down, and Tyndall, who, wide as his occupations and line of thought lay from Carlyle's, yet esteemed, honoured, loved him as much as any man living did. Tyndall made himself responsible to Mrs. Carlyle that her husband should be duly attended to on the road and at the scene of action; and to Tyndall's care she was content to leave him. The journey was to be broken at Fryston, where he would be received by Milnes, now Lord Houghton. There he was to stay two nights, and then go on to Scotland.

Accordingly, on Thursday, the 29th of March, at nine a.m., Tyndall appeared with a cab in Cheyne Row, he himself radiant—confident—or if he felt misgivings (I believe he felt none), resolute not to show them. Carlyle submitted passively to his directions, and did not seem outwardly disturbed, 'in the saddest sickly mood, full of gloom and misery; but striving to hide it.' She, it was observed, looked pale and ill, but in those days she seldom looked otherwise. She had been busy providing little comforts for his journey. Remembering the lecture days she gave him her own small travelling flask, with a single glass of brandy in it, that he might mix and drink it in the Hall, and think of her and be inspired.

'The last I saw of her (he says) was as she stood with her back to the parlour door to bid me goodbye. She kissed me twice, she me once, I her a second time.' The cab drove away. They were never to meet again in this world. 'Tyndall,' he says in his journal, 'was kind, cheery, inventive, helpful. The loyallest son could not have more faithfully striven to support his father under every difficulty that rose, and they were many.' In a letter he says, 'Tyndall's conduct to me has been loyalty s own self: no adoring son could have more faithfully watched a decrepit father.' Fryston was reached without misadventure. 'Lord and Lady Houghton's kindness was unbounded.' Tyndall wrote to Mrs. Carlyle daily reporting everything on its brightest side, though the omens did not open propitiously. 'My first night,' he wrote himself, 'owing to railway and other noises, not to speak of excitations, talkings, dinnerings, was totally sleepless; a night of wandering, starting to vain tobacco and

utter misery, thought of flying off next morning to Auchtertool for quiet.' Morning light and reflection restored some degree of composure. He was allowed to breakfast alone—Tyndall took him out for a long, brisk ride. He dined again alone, threw himself on a sofa, 'and by Heaven's blessing, had an hour and a half of real sleep.' In his bed he slept again for seven or eight hours, and on the Saturday on which he was to proceed found himself 'a new man.'

Huxley had joined the party at Fryston. Lord Houghton went with them as far as York. The travelling was disagreeable. Carlyle reached Edinburgh in the evening, 'the forlornest of all physical wretches.' There too the first night was 'hideous,' with 'dreadful feelings that speaking would be impossible,' 'that he would utterly break down;' to which he in his mind said, 'well then,' 'and was preparing to treat it with the best contempt he could.' On Sunday, however, he found himself surrounded with friendly faces. Mr. Erskine had come from Linlathen. His two brothers were there from Scotsbrig; all Edinburgh was combining to do him honour, and was hearty and warm and enthusiastic. His dispiritment was not proof against a goodwill which could not but be agreeable. He collected himself, slept well the Sunday night (as felons sleep, he would himself probably have said, the night before execution), and on the Monday was ready for action.

The installation of a Rector is a ceremonious affair. Ponderous robes have to be laid on, and there is a marching in procession of officials and dignitaries in crimson and ermine through the centre of the crowded Hall. The Rector is led to a conspicuous

chair; an oath is administered to him, and the business begins.

When Carlyle rose in his seat he was received with an enthusiasm at least as loud as had been shown for Mr. Gladstone—and perhaps the feeling of the students, as he had been one of themselves—was more completely genuine. I believe—for I was not present—that he threw off the heavy academical gown. He had not been accustomed to robes of honour. He had been only a man all his life; he chose to be a man still; about to address a younger generation who had come together to hear something that might be of use to them. He says of himself, 'My speech was delivered as in a mood of defiant despair, and under the pressure of nightmare. Some feeling that I was not speaking lies alone sustained me. The applause, &c., I took for empty noise, which it really was not altogether.' This is merely his own way of expressing that he was doing what he did not like; that, having undertaken it, he became interested in what he was about, grew possessed with his subject, and fell into the automatic state in which alone either speaking or any other valuable work can be done as it ought to be. His voice was weak. There were no more volleys of the old Annandale grape-shot; otherwise he was easy, fluent, and like himself in his calmest mood.

He began with a pretty allusion to the time when he had first come up (fifty-six years before) to Edinburgh to attend the University classes. Two entire generations had passed away since that time. A third, in choosing him as Rector, was expressing its opinion of the use which he had made of his life, and was declaring that 'he had not been an unworthy

labourer in the vineyard. At his age, and residing as he did, far away in London, he could be of little service to the University, but he might say a few words to the students which might perhaps be of some value to them. In soft, earnest language, with the plainest common-sense, made picturesque by the form in which it was expressed, he proceeded to impress on them the elementary duties of diligence, fidelity, and honest exertion, in their present work, as a preparation for their coming life. Their line of study was, in the main, marked out for them. So far as they could choose (after a half-reverent, half-humorous allusion to theology, exactly in the right tone for a modern audience) he advised them to read history—especially Greek and Roman history—and to observe especially how, among these nations, piety and awe of the gods lay at the bottom of their greatness; that without such qualities no man or nation ever came to good. Thence he passed to British history, to Oliver Cromwell, to their own Knox (one of the select of the earth), to the Covenanters, to the resolute and noble effort of the Scotch people to make Christ's gospel the rule of their daily lives. Religion was the thing essential. Theology was not so essential. He was giving in brief a popular epitome of his own opinions and the growth of them.

In early life he had himself been a Radical. He was a Radical still in substance, though no longer after the popular type. He was addressing students who were as ardent in that matter as he had himself once been, and he was going on dangerous ground as he advanced. But he chose to speak as he felt. He touched upon democracy. He showed how demo-

cracies, from the nature of things, never had been, and never could be of long continuance; how essential it was, in such a world as ours, that the noblest and wisest should lead and that the rest should obey and follow. It was thus that England and Scotland had grown to be what they were. It was thus only that they could keep the place which they had won. We were apt to think that through the spread of reading and knowledge the conditions of human nature were changed, and that inequalities no longer existed. He thought slightly of the spread of knowledge as it was called, 'maid-servants getting instructed in the 'ologies,' and 'knowing less of brewing, and boiling, and baking, of obedience, modesty, humility, and moral conduct.' Knowledge, wisdom, true superiority was as hard to come at now as ever, and there were just as few that arrived at it. He then touched on another branch of the same subject, one on which he was often thinking, the belief in oratory and orators which was now so widely prevailing. Demosthenes might be the greatest of orators, but Phocion proved right in the facts. And then after a word from Goethe on education, he came to speak of this present age, in which our own lot was cast. He spoke of it then as he always did—as an era of anarchy and disintegration, in which all things, not made of asbestos, were on the way to being consumed. He did not complain of this. He only bade his hearers observe it and make the best of it. He told them to be true and faithful in their own lives; to endeavour to do right, not caring whether they succeeded, as it was called, in life; to play their own parts as quietly and simply as they could, and to leave the

rest to Providence. 'Don't suppose,' he said, 'that people are hostile to you, or bear you ill-will in the world. You may often feel as if the whole world was obstructing you, setting itself against you; but you will find that to mean that the world is travelling in a different way, and, rushing on its own paths, heedlessly treads on you. That is mostly all. To you there is no specific ill-will.' He bade them walk straight forward; not expecting that life would be strewed with roses; and knowing that they must meet their share of evil as well as good. But he told them, too, that they would find friends if they deserved them, and in fact would meet the degree of success which they had on the whole deserved. He wound up with Goethe's hymn, which he had called, to Sterling, 'The marching music of the Teutonic nations;' and he finished with the words which to the end were so often upon his own lips:

'*Wir heissen euch hoffen.*' (We bid you to hope.)

He was long puzzled at the effect upon the world's estimate of him which this speech produced. There was not a word in it which he had not already said, and said far more forcibly a hundred times. But suddenly and thenceforward, till his death set them off again, hostile tongues ceased to speak against him, and hostile pens to write. The speech was printed in full in half the newspapers in the island. It was received with universal acclamation. A low price edition of his works became in demand, and they flew into a strange temporary popularity with the reading multitude. Sartor, 'poor beast,' had struggled into life with difficulty, and its readers since had been few, if select. 20,000 copies of the

shilling edition of it were now sold instantly on its publication. It was now admitted universally that Carlyle was a 'great man.' Yet he saw no inclination, not the slightest, to attend to his teaching. He himself could not make it out, but the explanation is not far to seek. The Edinburgh address contained his doctrines with the fire which had provoked the animosity taken out of them. They were reduced to the level of church sermons; thrown into general propositions which it is pretty and right and becoming to confess with our lips, while no one is supposed to act on them. We admire and praise the beautiful language, and we reward the performance with a bishopric, if the speaker be a clergyman. Carlyle, people felt with a sense of relief, meant only what the preachers meant, and was a fine fellow after all.

The address had been listened to with delight by the students, and had ended amidst rounds of applause. Tyndall telegraphed to Mrs. Carlyle his[1] brief but sufficient message, 'A perfect triumph.' The maids in Cheyne Row clapped their hands when it arrived. Maggie Welsh danced for delight. Mrs. Carlyle drove off to Forster's, where she was to dine. Dickens and Wilkie Collins were there, and they drank Carlyle's health, and it was, as she said, 'a good joy.' He meanwhile had escaped at his best speed from the scene of his exploit; making for his brother's lodgings in George Street, where he could smoke a pipe and collect himself. Hundreds of lads followed him, crowding and hurrahing.

I waved my hand prohibitively at the door (he wrote), perhaps lifted my hat, and they gave but one cheer more—

[1] *Letters and Memorials*, vol. iii. p. 318.

something in the tone of *it* which did for the first time go into my heart. Poor young men, so well affected to the poor old brother or grandfather here, and in such a black whirlpool of a world, all of us.

He dispatched a few words home.

All is finished, and rather well, infinitely better than I often expected. You never saw such a tempest of enthusiastic excitation as that among the student people. Never in the world was I in such a scene. I took your drop of brandy with me—mixed it in a tumbler for cooling of the tongue. I had privately a kind of *threap* that the brandy should be yours.

The note sent off, he had a quiet walk in the twilight with Erskine and his brother James.

Some fragments of ornamental work had still to be gone through; invitations to this and that, and congratulations to reply to; 'Spedding's letter welcomer than any other.' He slept tolerably in spite of excitement, but was 'like a man killed with kindness, all the world coming tumbling on him. Do me this, see me that! above all, dine, dine!' He stayed four days in the middle of all this. On the Thursday he was worn out. 'Oh!' he cried, 'there never was such an element—comparable to that of the three children in the fire before Nebuchadnezzar. . . .' His original plan had been to go straight home, but he was tempted by the thought of a few peaceful days in Annandale, before plunging into London again. On the Friday he made for quiet Scotsbrig, there, with no company but his brother and his sister Mary, to 'cool down and recover his wits.' The newspapers, meanwhile, were sounding his praises. 'Punch,' always affectionate, even in the

Pamphlet times, had a cartoon in which Carlyle was seen speaking on one side, like a gently wise old patriarch, and Bright on the other, with due contrast of face and sentiment. At the end of a week he was in his old condition again. 'Seldom,' he said, 'have I been better in the last six months, so blessed is the country stillness to me, the purity of sky and earth, and the absence of all babble and annoyance.' He would then have hastened back, but he met with an accident, a slight sprain in one of his ankles, sent, he supposed, 'to keep him in the level of common humanity, and take any undue conceit out of him.' Thus he lingered on, not sorry, perhaps, for the excuse. 'Punch' came to Scotsbrig, and 'gave everybody hearty entertainment.' 'The thing,' he said, 'is really capital, and has been done by some thoroughly well-wishing man. The portrait, too, is not bad, though comical a little, and the slap directed on Bright is perfectly suitable.' Mill wrote as warmly as he could about an address which must have been wholly unpalatable, Mrs. Carlyle sending the letter down to him, and expecting he 'would scream at such a frosty nothingness.' He did not scream, he answered, because he had ceased to care what Mill might do or forbear to do. 'Mill essentially was made of sawdust, he and his "great thinking of the Age," and was to be left lying, with good-bye and peace to him for evermore.'

The ankle was long in mending, and the return was still delayed. On the 19th of April he wrote—

> Nothing from Goody to-day—well, you have been handsomely diligent of late, and have given me at least one sunny blink among the great dreary mass I get on awaking

to a new day. I am very well in health here, sleep better than for a month past, in spite of the confusion and imperfect arrangements. The rides do me good. Yesterday it was as if pumping on me, and Dirty Swift (the Scotsbrig pony) and I, under the mackintosh, were equal or superior to the Trafalgar fountains in dramatic effect. But the silence, the clearness of the air and world, the poor old solitary scene too—all do me good; and if I had an Oberon to attend me, to pick a furnished tent from his waistcoat pocket, and blow it out to perfection, I should be tempted to linger a good while perhaps. But nothing of that is the arrangement in *esse* here, and I still think of Monday, the 23rd, as the day of return. At any rate mark that Jean and I are to go for Dumfries to-morrow; so for Saturday morning do you aim towards Dumfries, and hit me like a good bairn.

No more, except my blessing and adieu.

One more letter he was to write to her, which he was to find on his table in London, with the seal unbroken, and which stands endorsed by him, 'never read. Alas! alas!' The presentiment of evil which it contains may have been natural, for the post had again brought him nothing from her; but it deserves to be noticed.

Scotsbrig, April 20.

I had said, it is nothing, this silence of hers; but about 1 a.m., soon after going to bed, my first operation was a kind of dream; an actual introduction to the sight of you in bitterly bad circumstances, and I started broad awake with the thought, 'This was her silence, then, poor soul!' Send better news, and don't reduce me to dream. Adieu, dearest. Send better news, clearer any way. What a party is that of Saturday evening—unexampled in modern society, or nearly so. My regards to Froude.

Your ever affectionate

T. CARLYLE.

This was the last letter he ever wrote to her, and the last word in it was my own name. The 'party' spoken of will be explained immediately.

Anxiety about the speech and its concomitants had, as Mrs. Carlyle expressed it, 'tattered her to fiddlestrings.' The sudden relief, when it was over, was scarcely less trying. She had visitors to see, who came with their congratulations. She had endless letters to receive and answer. To escape from part of this she had gone to Windsor, to spend two days with her friend Mrs. Oliphant, and had greatly enjoyed her visit. On coming back she had dined with Lady William Russell, in Audley Square, and had there a smart passage of words with Mr. Hayward, on the Jamaica disturbances, the news of which, and of Governor Eyre's action, had just arrived. The chief subject of conversation everywhere was her husband's address, and of this there was nothing said but good. Tyndall came back. She saw him, heard all particulars from him, and was made perfectly happy about it. Carlyle himself would be home in a day or two. For Saturday the 21st, purposely that it might be got over before his arrival, she had invited a small party to tea.

Principal Tulloch and his wife were in London; they wished to meet me or else I to meet them. I forget which it was. I hope the desire was mutual. I, the Tullochs, Mr. and Mrs. Spottiswoode, and Mrs. Oliphant were to be Mrs. Carlyle's guests in Cheyne Row that evening. Geraldine Jewsbury, who was then living in Markham Square, was to assist in entertaining us. That morning Mrs. Carlyle wrote her daily letter to Carlyle, and took it herself to the post. In

the afternoon she went out in her brougham for the usual drive round Hyde Park, taking her little dog with her. Nero lay under a stone in the garden at Cheyne Row, but she loved all kinds of animals, dogs especially, and had found another to succeed him. Near Victoria Gate she had put the dog out to run. A passing carriage went over its foot, and, more frightened than hurt, it lay on the road on its back crying. She sprang out, caught the dog in her arms, took it with her into the brougham, and was never more seen alive. The coachman went twice round the drive, by Marble Arch down to Stanhope Gate, along the Serpentine and round again. Coming a second time near to the Achilles statue, and surprised to receive no directions, he turned round, saw indistinctly that something was wrong, and asked a gentleman near to look into the carriage. The gentleman told him briefly to take the lady to St. George's Hospital, which was not 200 yards distant. She was sitting with her hands folded on her lap *dead*.

I had stayed at home that day, busy with something, before going out in the evening. A servant came to the door, sent by the housekeeper at Cheyne Row, to say that something had happened to Mrs. Carlyle, and to beg me to go at once to St. George's. Instinct told me what it must be. I went on the way to Geraldine; she was getting ready for the party, and supposed that I had called to take her there. I told her the message which I had received. She flung a cloak about her, and we drove to the hospital together. There, on a bed in a small room, we found Mrs. Carlyle, beautifully dressed, dressed

as she always was, in quietly perfect taste. Nothing had been touched. Her bonnet had not been taken off. It was as if she had sate upon the bed after leaving the brougham, and had fallen back upon it asleep. But there was an expression on her face which was not sleep, and which, long as I had known her, resembled nothing which I had ever seen there. The forehead, which had been contracted in life by continued pain, had spread out to its natural breadth, and I saw for the first time how magnificent it was. The brilliant mockery, the sad softness with which the mockery alternated, both were alike gone. The features lay composed in a stern majestic calm. I have seen many faces beautiful in death, but never any so grand as hers. I can write no more of it. I did not then know all her history. I knew only how she had suffered, and how heroically she had borne it. Geraldine knew everything. Mrs. Carlyle, in her own journal, calls Geraldine her *Consuelo*, her chosen comforter. She could not speak. I took her home. I hurried down to Cheyne Row, where I found Forster half-distracted, yet, with his vigorous sense, alive to what must immediately be done. Mr. Blunt, the Rector of Chelsea, was also there; he, too, dreadfully shaken, but collected and considerate. Two points had immediately to be considered: how to communicate the news to Carlyle; and how to prevent an inquest and an examination of the body, which Forster said would kill him. Forster undertook the last. He was a lunacy commissioner, and had weight with official persons. Dr. Quain had attended Mrs. Carlyle in her illness, and from him I believe Forster obtained a certificate of the probable cause of the death,

which was received as sufficient. As to Carlyle, we did not know precisely where he was, whether at Dumfries or Scotsbrig. In the uncertainty a telegram was sent to John Carlyle at Edinburgh, another to Dr. John Brown, should John Carlyle be absent. By them the news was forwarded the same night to Dumfries, to his brother-in-law, Mr. Aitken, with whom he was staying, to be communicated according to Mr. Aitken's discretion.

And now I go on with Carlyle's own narrative written a fortnight after.

Saturday night, about 9 p.m., I was sitting in sister Jean's at Dumfries, thinking of my railway journey to Chelsea on Monday, and perhaps of a sprained ankle I had got at Scotsbrig two weeks or so before, when the fatal telegrams, two of them in succession, came. It had a kind of *stunning* effect upon me. Not for above two days could I estimate the immeasurable depths of it, or the infinite sorrow which had peeled my life all bare, and in a moment shattered my poor world to universal ruin. They took me out next day to wander, as was medically needful, in the green sunny sabbath fields, and ever and anon there rose from my sick heart the ejaculation, 'My poor little woman!' but no full gust of tears came to my relief, nor has yet come. Will it ever? A stony Woe's me, woe's me! sometimes with infinite tenderness and pity, not for myself, is my habitual mood hitherto. I had been hitching lamely about, my company the green solitudes and fresh spring breezes, quietly but far from happily, about the hour she died.

Sixteen hours after the telegram, Sunday, about 2 p.m., there came to me a *letter* from her, written on Saturday, before going out, the cheeriest and merriest of all her several prior ones. A note for her, written at Scotsbrig Friday morning, and which should have been a pleasure to her at breakfast that morning, was not put in till after 6 a.m.

at Ecclefechan, negligence excusable but unforgetable; had not left Ecclefechan till 10 p.m., nor arrived till 2 p.m., and lay *un*opened.

Monday morning, John set off with me for London. Never, for 1,000 years, should I forget that arrival here of ours, my first *un*welcomed by her. She lay in her coffin, lovely in death. Pale death, and things not mine or ours, had possession of our poor darling. Very kind, very helpful to *me*, if to no other, everybody was; for I learnt ultimately, had it not been for John Forster and Dr. Quain, and everybody's mercy to me, there must have been, by rule, a coroner's inquest held, which would have been a blotch upon my memory, intolerable then, and discordantly ugly for all time coming. It is to Forster's unwearied and invincible efforts that I am indebted for escape from this sad defilement of my feelings. Indeed, his kindness then and all through, in every particular and detail, was *un*exampled, of a cordiality and assiduity almost painful to me. Thanks to him, and perpetual recollection. Next day wander over the fatal localities in Hyde Park, Forster and brother John settling, apart from me, everything for the morrow. Morrow, Wednesday morning, we were under way with our sacred burden. John and F. kindly did not speak to me. Good Twistleton was in the train without consulting me. I looked out upon the spring fields, the everlasting skies in silence, and had for most part a more endurable day till Haddington, where friends were waiting with hospitalities, which almost drove me openly wild. I went out to walk in the moonlit silent streets, *not* suffered to go alone. I looked up at the windows of the old room, where I had first seen her, on a summer evening after sunset, six and forty years ago. Edward Irving had brought me out walking to Haddington, *she* the first thing I had to see then; the beautifullest young creature I had ever beheld, sparkling with grace and talent, though sunk in sorrow[1] and speaking little. I noticed her once looking at me. Oh heavens, to think of that now!

[1] She had lately lost her father.

The Dodds,[1] excellent people, in their honest, homely way, had great pity for me, patience with me. I retired to my room, slept none all night, little sleep to me since that telegram night, but lay silent in the great silence. Thursday, April 26, wandered out into the churchyard, &c., at 1 p.m. came the funeral, silent, small, only twelve old friends and two volunteers besides us there. Very beautiful and noble to me, and I laid her in the grave of her father, according to covenant of 40 years back, and all was ended. In the nave of the old Abbey Kirk, long a ruin, now being saved from further decay, with the skies looking down on her, there sleeps my little Jeannie, and the light of her face will never shine on me more.

We withdrew that afternoon; posted up by Edinburgh, with its many confusions, towards London all night; and about 10 or 11 a.m. were shovelled out here, where I am hitching and wandering about; best off in strict solitude—were it only possible—my own solace and employment that of doing all which I could imagine *she* would have liked me to do. . . . The first awakening in the morning, the reality of all, stripped so *bare* before me, is the ghastliest half-hour of the day. A kind of leaden weight of sorrow has come over all my universe, with sharp poignancy of memory every now and then. I cannot weep; no relief yet, or almost none—of tears. God enable me to live out my poor remnant of days in a manner she would have applauded. Hers —as known to me only—were all very noble, a life of hidden beauty, all given to me as part of my own. How had I deserved it? I, unworthy! Beautiful, exceedingly! Oh, how mournfully beautiful now! I called her and thought her my Schätzen; but my word was shallow as compared to the fact, and I never thought of losing her. Vaguely, always, I reckoned that I as the elder should be the first, such a vivacity and brightness of life I noticed in her, in spite of her perpetual burden of infirmities and sufferings day by day. Twice, perhaps thrice, during her horrible illness

[1] Old friends of the Welshes, at whose house he was received at Haddington.

of 1864, the thought rose in me, ghastly and terrible, that I was about to lose her; but always my hope soon revived into a strange kind of *confidence*; and very rarely was my work interrupted, but went on steadily up in the garret, as the one thing salvatory to both of us. And oh, her looks as she sate in the balcony at St. Leonards! Never, never shall I forget that tenderness of love, and that depth as of misery and despair.

In these days, with mournful pleasure, Carlyle composed the beautiful epitaph which is printed in the 'Letters and Memorials[1],' 'a word,' he said, 'true at least, and coming from his heart, which felt a momentary solace from it.' A few letters, too, he wrote on the subject, two especially to Mr. Erskine, one while the wound was freshly bleeding, another a few months after, which I give together:—

To Thomas Erskine, Esq.

Chelsea, May 1, 1866.

Dear Mr. Erskine,—Your little word of sympathy went to my heart, as few of the many others could do. Thanks for it. Thanks also, and many of them, for your visit to poor Betty,[2] to whom I have yet written nothing, though well aware that of all living hearts but one, hers is the saddest on this occasion. Pray go out to her again after a time, and say that so long as I live in the world, I wish and propose to keep sight of her, and in any distress that may fall on her, to ask myself what I can do to be of help to that good soul.

Hitherto I write to nobody, see nobody but my brother and Maggie Welsh, of Auchtertool. Indeed, I find it is best when I do not even speak to anybody. The stroke that has fallen on me is immeasurable, and has shattered in pieces

[1] Vol. iii. p. 341.

[2] Mrs. Carlyle's old Haddington nurse, often mentioned in her letters.

my whole existence, which now suddenly lies all in ruins round me. In her name, whom I have lost, I must try to repair it, rebuild it into something of order for the few years or days that may remain to me, try not to waste them further, but to do something useful with them, under the stern monition I have had. If I but can, that should be my way of honouring her, whose history on earth now lies before me, all bathed in sorrow, but beautiful exceedingly, nay, of a kind of epic grandeur and heroic nobleness, known only to one heart now. God bless you, dear Mr. Erskine. You will not forget me, Mrs. Stirling and you; nor will I either of you.

Yours sincerely,
T. CARLYLE.

Chelsea: October 27, 1866.

Dear Mr. Erskine,—Your word of remembrance was very welcome to me, and has gone ringing through my solitude here with a gentle, pleasant, and friendly sound ever since. I have had many thoughts since I last saw you, silent nearly all, and mostly beyond the domain of words. A calamity which was most sudden, which was infinite to me, and for which there is no remedy conceivable, my poor little home in this world, as if struck by lightning, when I least expected it, and shattered all into ruin!—I have had enough to think of, to mourn over, and earnestly consider; taking counsel of the Eternities mainly, and of such still voices as dwell *there*. I have been and am very sad, sad as death I may well say; but not miserable either; nothing of the mean wretchedness which has defaced other long portions of my life. This is all noble, tender, solemn to me. I might define it as a time of divine *worship* rather, perhaps the only period of real *worship* I have known for a great while past. I have tried considerably to be busy, too, and am still trying. Much has to be set in order, and rest is not permitted till I follow whither she has gone before me. May my death, which stands calmly consolatory in my sight at all moments, be beautiful as hers, and God's will be done now and for ever.

For several weeks there was absolutely no speech or company. Now there is occasionally an hour of rational discourse, which is worth something. Vain, idle talk, which is always rife enough, I find much sadder than any form of silence. My bodily health is not worse, perhaps even a shade better than what you last saw of it. My arrangements for the winter are not yet fixed; but I try to keep myself in what I fondly call work, of a weak kind, fitted to my weakness. That is my anchor, if it will hold. Adieu, dear Mr. Erskine! Here has F. come in upon me, who is my nearest neighbour and a good man. I must say farewell.

Yours ever,

T. CARLYLE.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A.D. 1866. ÆT. 71.

Message of sympathy from the Queen—John Carlyle—Retrospects—A future life—Attempts at occupation—Miss Davenport Bromley—The Eyre Committee—Memories—Mentone—Stay there with Lady Ashburton—Entries in Journal.

THE installation at Edinburgh had drawn the world's eyes on Carlyle. His address had been in everyone's hands, had been admired by the wise, and had been the fashion of the moment with the multitude. The death of his wife following immediately, in so sudden and startling a manner, had given him the genuine sympathy of the entire nation. His enemies, if enemies remained, had been respectfully silent. The Queen represented her whole subjects and the whole English-speaking race when she conveyed to Cheyne Row, through Lady Augusta Stanley, a message delicate, graceful, and even affectionate. John Carlyle had remained there after the return from Haddington to London. To him Lady Augusta wrote, at her Majesty's desire, and I will not injure the effect of her words by compressing them.

To Dr. Carlyle.

Osborne: April 30, 1866.

Dear Dr. Carlyle,—I was here when the news of the terrible calamity with which your brother has been visited

reached Her Majesty, and was received by her with feelings of sympathy and regret, all the more keen from the lively interest with which the Queen had so recently followed the proceedings in Edinburgh. Her Majesty expressed a wish that, as soon as I could do so, I should convey to Mr. Carlyle the expression of these feelings, and the assurance of her sorrowful understanding of a grief which she herself, alas! knows too well.

It was with heartfelt interest that the Queen heard yesterday that Mr. Carlyle had been able to make the effort to return to his desolate home, and that you are with him.

Personally Carlyle was unknown to the Queen. He had never been presented, had never sought admission within the charmed circle which surrounds the constitutional crown. Perhaps, in reading Lady Augusta's words, he thought more of the sympathy of the 'bereaved widow' than of the notice of his sovereign. He replied :—

Chelsea: May 1, 1866.

Dear Lady Augusta,—The gracious mark of Her Majesty's sympathy touches me with many feelings, sad and yet beautiful and high. Will you in the proper manner, with my humblest respects, express to Her Majesty my profound sense of her great goodness to me, in this the day of my calamity. I can write to nobody. It is best for me at present when I do not even speak to anybody.

Believe me yours, with many grateful regards,

T. CARLYLE.

What he was to do next, how he was to live for the future, who was to live with him and take care of him, were questions which his friends were anxiously asking among themselves. Circumstances, nature, everything seemed to point to his brother John as the fittest companion for him. From early

years John had been the nearest to his heart of all his brothers. John was the correspondent to whom he wrote with the most absolute undisguise; from whom alone—and this was the highest proof of affection which he could give—he had once been prepared to accept help in money, if extremity had overtaken him. After a good many years of experience as a family physician, after some fitful independent practice, John Carlyle had retired from his profession with an ample fortune. He had married, but had been left a childless widower, and was using his means in adding to the comforts of his sisters' families. He had a sound intellect, which he had diligently cultivated. He was a fine Italian scholar. His translation of Dante was of admitted excellence. In face, in voice, in mind, he was like his brother. Though with less fire and capacity, he was his equal in singleness of character, essentially true, genuine, and good—with occasional roughness of manner, occasional heedlessness of other people's feelings—but with an honest affectionateness, with an admiration and even adoration of his brother's grander qualities. He, of all others, was the one who was best qualified to relieve, by residing there, 'the gaunt solitude of Cheyne Row.'

Some thoughts of the kind, as will be seen, had been in the minds of both of them. Meanwhile, somewhere about in the first week in May, Carlyle, who had hitherto desired to be left alone, sent me a message that he would like to see me. He came down to me into the library in his dressing gown, haggard and as if turned to stone. He had scarcely slept, he said, since the funeral. He could not

'cry.' He was stunned and stupefied. He had never realised the possibility of losing her. He had settled that he would die first, and now she was gone. From this time and onwards, as long as he was in town, I saw him almost daily. He was looking through her papers, her notebooks and journals; and old scenes came mercilessly back to him in vistas of mournful memory. In his long sleepless nights, he recognised too late what she had felt and suffered under his childish irritabilities. His faults rose up in remorseless judgment, and as he had thought too little of them before, so now he exaggerated them to himself in his helpless repentance. For such faults an atonement was due, and to her no atonement could now be made. He remembered, however, Johnson's penance at Uttoxeter; not once, but many times, he told me that something like that was required from him, if he could see his way to it. 'Oh!' he cried, again and again, 'if I could but see her once more, were it but for five minutes, to let her know that I always loved her through all that. She never did know it, never.' 'If he could but see her again!' His heart seemed breaking as he said it, and through these weeks and months he was often mournfully reverting to the subject, and speculating whether such future meeting might be looked for or not. He would not let himself be deluded by emotion. His intellect was vigorous as ever, as much as ever on its guard against superstition. The truth about the matter was, he admitted, absolutely hidden from us; we could not know, we were not meant to know. It would be as God willed. 'In my Father's house are many mansions!' 'Yes,' he said, 'if you are God,

you may have a right to say so; if you are man, what do you know more than I or any of us?' Yet then and afterwards when he grew calm, and was in full possession of himself, he spoke always of a life to come, and the meeting of friends in it as a thing not impossible. In spite of science he had a clear conviction that everything in this universe, to the smallest detail, was ordered with a conscious purpose. Nothing happened to any man which was not ordained to happen. No accident, no bullet on battlefield, or sickness at home, could kill a man till the work for which he was appointed was done, and if this was so, we were free to hope that there was a purpose in our individual existence which was not exhausted in our earthly condition. The spirit, the soul of man, was not an accident or mere result of the organisation of protoplasm. Intellect and moral sense were not put into man by a being which had none of its own. At no time of Carlyle's life had such a conclusion as this been credible to him. Again it was unlike nature so to waste its energies as to spend seventy years in training and disciplining a character, and to fling it away when complete, as a child flings away a plaything. It is possible that his present and anguished longing lent more weight to these arguments than he would otherwise have been able to allow them. At any rate it was round this hope and round his own recollections and remorse that our conversations chiefly turned when we took up our walks again; the walks themselves tending usually to the spot where Mrs. Carlyle was last seen alive; where, in rain or sunshine, he reverently bared his head.

By degrees he roused himself, as he said in his

letters to Erskine, to think of trying some work again. He could still do something. Politics, philosophy, literature, were rushing on faster than ever in the direction which he most disliked. He sketched a scheme for a journal in which there was to be a running fire of opposition to all that. I and Ruskin were to contribute, and it might have come to something if all three of us had been willing, which it appears we were not. In a note of the 2nd of August, this year, he says to me:—

> Has Ruskin yet written to you on that periodical we, or at least I, were talking of? I did not find him bite very ardently on my first or on this second mention of the project; nor do I know what you can well answer him; nor am I to be much or perhaps at all considered in it. I! alas! alas! but the thing will have to be done one day, I am well of opinion; though by whom or how, which of us can say?

John Carlyle stayed on in Cheyne Row, with no fixed arrangement, but as an experiment to see how it would answer. We all hoped it might continue; but struck down as Carlyle had been he was still himself, and his self-knowledge made him amusingly cautious. John, good-natured though he might be, had his own ways and humours, and his own plainness of speech; and to live easily with Carlyle required that one must be prepared to take stormy weather when it came in silence. He would be penitent afterwards; he knew his brother's merits and his own faults. 'Your readiness,' he said, 'and eagerness at all times to be of help to me, you may depend upon it is a thing I am always well aware of, at the bottom of all my impatiences and discontents.' But the impatiences and discontents were there, and

had to be calculated upon. John was willing to go on, and Carlyle did not absolutely refuse, but both, after some months' trial, doubted if the plan would answer.

I felt (Carlyle wrote to him, during a short separation) that in the practical substance of the thing you are probably right. Noises are not the rock it need split on. Everything might be peaceably deafened, if that were all; but it is certain you and I have given one another considerable annoyance, and have never yet been able to do *together*. That is the nature of the two beasts. They cannot change that, and ought to consider it well in their eagerness to be near one another, and get the benefit of mutual affection, now that each of them, one of them above all, needs it more and more. I must see, I must see; and you too, if you are still upon this project, you will consider all things, weigh them with the utmost clearness you have, and gradually come to some decision which the facts will correspond to. The facts will be very rigid when we try them.

The wish to live together was evidently more on John's part than on Carlyle's. Carlyle was perhaps right. The 'two beasts' were both too old to change their natures, and they would agree best if they did not see each other too often. John went back to Scotland; Carlyle was left alone: and other friends now claimed the privilege of being of use to him, especially Miss Davenport Bromley, the 'flight of sky larks,' and Lady Ashburton. They had been both *her* friends also, and were, therefore, in his present mood, especially dear to him. Miss Bromley was then living at Ripplè Court, near Walmer. She invited Carlyle to stay with her. He went in the middle of August, and relates his visit in his journal.

Journal.

Ripple Court, August 15, 1866.—Arrived here the day before yesterday—beautiful sunny day in the midst of wet and windy ones. Solitude and green country, spotted with autumn colours and labours, mournfully welcome to me after the dreary sadness and unwelcome interruptions to my poor labours at Chelsea which, alas! were nothing more than the sorting, labelling, and tying up in bundles *all* that is now left me of her that is gone. Was in this country once, now 42 years ago, and remember a Sunday of wandering between Dover and here with Edward Irving and Mr. Strachey. What a flight of *time*! My project here was 14 days of solitude and sea-bathing. Hitherto, except a very long sleep, not of the healthiest, last night, almost all has gone rather awry with me.

August 16.—Had a beautiful ride yesterday, a tolerable bathe, plenty of walking, driving, &c., and imagined I was considerably improving myself; but, alas! in the evening came the G.'s, and a dinner amounting to total wreck of sleep to me. Got up at 3 a.m., sate reading till 6, and except a ride, good enough in itself, but far from 'pleasant' in my state of nerves and heart, have had a day of desolate misery, the harder to bear as it is *useless* too, and results from a visit which I could have avoided had I been skilful. Oh, my lost one! oh, my lost one! irrecoverable to my lonely heart for ever.

'Miss Bromley's hospitality and genuine beautifully simple politeness and kindness were beyond all praise,' he said when his visit was over. But the time at Ripple Court had been spent, 'as in Hades,' the general complexion of his thoughts, and he was glad to get back to his 'gloomy dwelling.' The Hades, in fact, was in himself, and was therefore everywhere. The hopgardens and woods had given him a faint pleasure on his way up through Kent or

the railway. 'After Sydenham it became unspeakable, abominable, a place fitter for demons and enchanted swine than for human creatures of an ordinary type.' On reaching home he wrote a grateful letter to his hostess, 'whose goodness to him he would never forget.' 'My home,' he said, 'is very gaunt and lonesome; but such is my allotment henceforth in this world. I have taken loyally to my vacant circumstances, and will try to do my best with them.'

Another invitation was awaiting him. Lady Ashburton had taken a house at Mentone, and pressed him to spend the winter months with her there. She asked Miss Welsh to accompany him, 'to screen him, and pad everything into softness in the new scene.' She was so warm, so eager in her offers, showed so clearly that his consent would be rather for her pleasure than his own, that he resisted his natural impulse to refuse on the spot. He let his decision wait till he had disposed of a matter which had become immediately pressing.

The affair of Governor Eyre had blown into white heat. In submission to general clamour Eyre had been recalled in disgrace. He had applied for other employment and had been refused. He had several children, and was irretrievably ruined. It was, Carlyle said to me, as if a ship had been on fire; the captain, by immediate and bold exertion, had put the fire out, and had been called to account for having flung a bucket or two of water into the hold beyond what was necessary. He had damaged some of the cargo, perhaps, but he had saved the ship. The action of the Government, in Carlyle's opinion, was base and ungenerous, and when the recall was not

sufficient, but Eyre was threatened with prosecution, beaten as he himself was to the ground, he took weapon in hand again, and stood forward, with such feeble support as he could find for an unpopular cause, in defence of a grossly injured man.

To Miss Davenport Bromley.

Chelsea: August 30, 1866.

Yesterday, in spite of the rain, I got up to the Eyre Committee, and even let myself be voted into the chair, such being the post of danger on the occasion, and truly something of a forlorn hope, and place for *enfans perdus*. We seemed, so far as I can measure, to be a most feeble committee; a military captain, a naval ditto, a young city merchant, Henry Kingsley, Charles still hanging back afraid, old S. C. Hall of the Art Union, a well-meaning man; only these, with a secretary who had bright swift eyes, but showed little knowledge of his element. . . . In short, contrary to all hope, I had to set my own shoulders to the wheel, and if it made any progress at all, which I hope it did, especially in that of trying for an infinitely *better* committee, the probable chief cause was that my old coat is not afraid of a little mud on the sleeve of it, as superfiner ones might be. Poor Eyre! I am heartily sorry for him, and for the English nation, which makes such a dismal fool of itself. Eyre, it seems, has fallen suddenly from 6,000*l.* a year into almost zero, and has a large family and needy kindred dependent on him. Such his reward for saving the West Indies, and hanging one incendiary mulatto, well worth the gallows, if I can judge.

I was myself one of the cowards. I pleaded that I did not understand the matter, that I was editor of 'Fraser,' and should disturb the proprietors; mere paltry excuses to escape doing what I knew to be right. Ruskin was braver far, and spoke out like a

man. Carlyle sent Miss Bromley a copy of what he had said.

The Eyre Committee, he wrote on September 15, is going on better, indeed is now getting fairly on its feet. Ruskin's speech—now don't frown upon it, but read it again till you understand it—is a right gallant thrust I can assure you. While all the world stands tremulous, shilly-shallying from the gutter, impetuous Ruskin plunges his rapier up to the very hilt in the abominable belly of the vast block-headism, and leaves it staring very considerably.

The monster, alas! was an enchanted monster, and 'as the air invulnerable.' Its hour had not come, and has not yet, in spite of Ruskin's rapier. Carlyle gave his money and his name, but he was in no condition for rough struggling with the 'blatant beast.' He soon saw that he could make no impression upon the Government, and that Eyre was in no personal danger from the prosecution. He wrote a few words to one of the newspapers, expressing briefly his own feeling about the matter, and so left it.

Journal.

September 26, 1866.—Eyre Defence Committee—small letter of mine—has been raging through all the newspapers of the empire, I am told; for I have carefully avoided everything *pro* or *contra* that the foolish populace of scribblers in any form put forth upon it or me. *Indifferent* in very deed. What is or can be the value to any rational man of what these empty insincere fools say or think on the subject of Eyre's Jamaica measures, or of me that approve them. Weather very wet. Wettest harvest I have seen since 1816. Country very base and mad, so far as I survey its proceedings. Bright, Beales, Gladstone, Mill, and Co., bring on the suffrage question, kindling up the slow *canaille*

what they can. This, and 'Oh, make the niggers happy!' seem to be the two things needful with these sad people. Sometimes I think the tug of revolution struggle may be even *near* for poor England, much nearer than I once judged —very questionable to me whether England won't go quite to *smash* under it (perhaps better that it do, having reached such a pitch of spiritual *beggary*), and whether there is much good likelihood that England can ever get out of such *Medea's Caldron* again, "made new," and not rather be boiled to slushy rags and ended? My pleasure or hope in looking at the things round me, or talking of them to almost any person, is not great.

The world was going *its* way, and not Carlyle's. He was finding a more congenial occupation for himself, in reviving the history of his own young days, of the life at Ecclefechan and Mainhill, with the old scenes and the old companions. He had begun 'languidly,' as he said, to write the 'Reminiscences of Edward Irving,' which were more about himself than his friend; and to recall and write down fragments of his mother's talk.[1]

[1] One of these fragments, as it had special reference to himself, besides being curious in itself, I preserve in a note.

Journal.

'*September* 26.—Ghyouw—a name my mother had for any big ill-shaped awkward object—would sometimes call me, not in ill-humour, half in good, "Thou Ghyouw." Some months ago I found, with great interest, that in old Icelandic the same word—sound the same, spelling slightly different—was, and perhaps is, their term for the huge volcanic crack or chasm that borders their old Parliament-place or Thing valla, still well known. My mother, bred not in a country of chasms, never used it except for solid bodies; but with her, too, it completely meant a thing shapeless, rude, awkwardly huge; the huger the fitter for its name. I never heard the word from any other mouth. Probably now there is no other Scotchman alive that knows the existence of it in his mother tongue—proof positive, nevertheless, and indisputable, that the Lowland Scots spoke an Icelandic or old Norse language a thousand or thousands

While thus employed, he did not encourage visitors.

Strange [he said] how little good *any*, even the best of them can do *me*. Best, sad best, is that I be left to myself and *my* sorrows. My state is then much more supportable and dignified. My thoughts, all sad as death, but also calm and high, and silent as Eternity, presided over by *her*, and my grief for her, in which there is something of devout and inexpressibly tender—really my most appropriate mood in the condition I am got to. Remedy must be had against such intrusions of the impertinent and kind; but how?

A note in the 'Journal' says that my visits and Ruskin's were *not* regarded as impertinent. He allowed me to see as much of him as I liked. He did not tell me what he was doing, but talked much on the subject of it. He often said—the wish no doubt suggesting the expectation—that he thought his own end was near. He was endeavouring to preserve the most precious parts of his recollections, before they and he should pass away together. The Irving memories were dear to him, but there was something else that was still dearer. Putting these aside for the time, he set himself to write a memoir of the beautiful existence which had gone at the side

of years ago. My mother's natal place was the Water of Ae (little farm of Whitestanes, or Hazelly Bray afterwards), pleasant pastoral green hill region at the N.W. nook of Annandale, just before Annandale, reaching the summit of the watershed, closes, and the ground drops rapidly down to Closelinn, Kil Osbern, and is Nithsdale, which you can still see, then and long afterwards, was a part of Galloway, most of the names in it still Celtic; and the accent of the wild Scots of Galloway rapidly, almost instantly, exchanging itself for that of the Teutonic Annandalers. Perhaps this of *Giaou* or *Ghyouw* is written down somewhere else (nowhere that I know of.—J. A. F.). I did not wish it forgotten, being now sole depositary of it—pretty little fact—clear and dear to me.—T. C.'

of his own, a record of what his wife had been to him, and a testimony of his own appreciation. At their first acquaintance, it was she who was to make a name in literature, and he was to have supported and stood by her. It was a consolation to him to describe the nature and the capabilities which had been sacrificed to himself, that the portrait of her might still survive. He was not writing it for the world. He finished it just before he went abroad, when he was expecting that in all probability he would never see England again. He left it sealed up, with directions to those into whose hands it might fall, that it was not to be published, no one being capable of properly editing it after he should be gone.

He had decided that he would try Mentone. Lady Ashburton had entreated. His friends believed that change would be good for him. He himself, languid, indifferent, but having nothing of special consequence to retain him in England, had agreed to go. Miss Welsh could not accompany him. He was not equal to the journey alone. The same friend who had taken charge of him to Edinburgh undertook to place him safely under Lady Ashburton's roof, an act of respectful attention which Carlyle never forgot, 'So chivalrous it was.' For Tyndall was not an idle gentleman, with time on his hands. He had his own hard work to attend to in London, and would be obliged to return on the instant. But he was accustomed to travelling. He was as good a courier as Neuberg, and to sacrifice a few days to Carlyle was an honour and a pleasure.

They started on the 22nd of December, and in

two days were transported from the London fogs to the sunny shores of the Mediterranean.

Journal.

Mentone, January 20, 1867.—Am actually here; came the day before Christmas, Professor Tyndall triumphantly bringing me. The heroic Tyndall would hear no whisper of my paying his expenses, though hither and thither they must have exceeded 20*l.*, and he came purely on my account. Christmas Day, a strange contrast to English experience, being hot and bright, the gracious lady took us all on asses by the rugged cliffs and sierras to a village and peak called St. Agnes, strangest village in the world, with a strange old castle, perched on the very point of the cliff, where we lunched in sight of the population. In the evening we dined with Lady Marion Alford, not known to me before, but elegant, gifted, and blandly high in her way, who, with her two sons, Lord Brownlow and Mr. Cust, are the only interesting people I have met here. Tyndall set off homeward the second day after.

Thus was Carlyle left in a new environment; nothing save the face of his hostess not utterly strange to him, among olive groves and palms and oranges, the mountains rising behind into the eternal snow, and the sea before his windows—Homer's *violet* sea at last under his eyes. Here he got his papers about him. Lady Ashburton left him to himself. He went on with his Reminiscences, and in the intervals wandered as he pleased. Everyone feels well on first reaching the Riviera. Carlyle slept soundly, discovered 'real improvement' in himself, and was almost sorry to discover it.

My poor life [the 'Journal' continues] seems as good as over. I have no heart or strength of hope or of interest for further work. Since my sad loss I feel lonesome in the

earth (Oh, how lonesome !) and solitary among my fellow-creatures. The loss of her comes daily home to me as the irreparable, as the loss of all; and the heart as before knows its own sorrow, if no other ought to do so. What can any other help, even if he wished it? . . . I have finished Edward Irving's Reminiscences, and yesterday a short paper of Jeffrey's ditto. It was her connection with them that chiefly impelled me. Both are superficially, ill, and poorly done, especially the latter. But there is something of value for oneself in re-awakening the sleep of the past, and bringing old years carefully to survey by one's new eyes. A certain solemn tenderness too, in these two cases, dwells in it for me; and, in fine, doing anything not wicked is better than doing nothing.

Distinguished visitors called in passing on their way to or from Italy; among others, Mr. Gladstone, 'on return from Rome and the Man of Sin,' 'intending for Paris, and an interview with M. Fould.'

Journal.

January 23.—Gladstone, *en route* homewards, called on Monday, and sate a long time talking, principally waiting for Madame Bunsen, his old friend, whom it was his one chance of seeing, as he had to leave for Paris the next day. Talk copious, ingenious, but of no worth or sincerity—pictures, literature, finance, prosperities, greatness of outlook for Italy, &c.—a man ponderous, copious, of evident faculty, but all gone irrecoverably into House of Commons shape—man once of some wisdom or possibility of it, but now possessed by the Prince, or many Princes, of the Power of the Air. Tragic to me rather, and far from enviable; from whom one felt oneself divided by abysmal chasms and immeasurabilities. He went next morning; but it seems, by the journals, will find his M. Fould, &c., suddenly thrown out by some jerk of their inscrutable Copper Captain, and unable to do the honours of Paris in the way they wished.

His chief pleasure at Mentone was in long walks about the neighbourhood. He was the best of literary landscape painters, and his journal, with his letters to myself and others, are full of exquisite little sketches, like the pictures of the old masters, where you have not merely a natural scene before you, but the soul of the man who looks upon it.

Journal.

Mentone, January 21.—I went out yesterday, walked two or three miles up the silent valley; trifling wet of mist, which hung in shifting scarfs and caps all about among the peaks of the ravine; beautiful green of orange woods and olive woods; here and there a silent olive mill, far down in some nook at the bottom, nothing but its idle mill-race and the voice of the torrent audible; here and there a melancholy ill-kept little chapel, locked, I suppose, but its two windows open with iron stanchions, inviting the faithful to take view of the bits of idols inside, and try if prayer was possible. Oh ye bewildered and bewildering sons of men! There was a twitch of strange pity and misery that shot through me at the thought of man's lot on earth, and the comparison of our dumb Eternities and Immensities with this poor joss-house and bambino. I might have had reflection enough, for there reigned everywhere the most perfect Sabbath stillness; and Nature and her facts lay round me, silently going their long road. But my heart was heavy, my bodily case all warped awry; and except my general canopy of sadness and regret, very vain except for the love that is in it, regret for the inevitable and inexorable, there was nothing of *thought* present to me.

To Miss Davenport Bromley.

Mentone: January 23.

You heard of my safe arrival in these parts, that the promises they made me seemed to be good. I am lucky to

add that the promise has been kept so far that, outwardly and that in respect of sleep, &c., I feel as if rather better than in Chelsea; certainly not worse. Sometimes for moments it almost seems as if I might perhaps recognise some actual vestige of better health in these favoured latitudes, and be again a little more alive than of late. But that is only for moments. In what is called 'spirits' I don't seem to improve much, or, if improvement means increase of buoyancy or levity, to improve at all. How should I? In these wild silent ravines one's thoughts gravitate towards death and eternity with more proclivity than ever, and in the absence of serious human discourse, go back to the vanished past as the one profitable or dignified company. There has been no glimpses of what one would call bad weather; for the most part brilliant sunshine, mixed with a tingling briskness of air.

In beauty of situation, of aspect and prospect by sea and land, nothing can exceed us in the world. Mentone, old town and new, latter perhaps a hundred years old, former several *thousands*, is built principally as a single street by the sea-shore, along the diameter of two beautiful semicircular little hollows, or half-amphitheatres, formed by the mountains which are the airiest wings of rocky peaks and cliffs, all terraced and olive-clad, with sometimes an old castle and village. Castle visible like a bird-cage from the shore here, six miles off. I never saw so strangely beautiful a ring of peaks, especially this western one, which is still new to me every morning on stepping out. Western ring and eastern form in the middle, especially form at each *end*, their bits of capes and promontories and projections into the sea, so that we sit in the hollow of an alcove, and no wind from the north can reach us at all; maritime Alps intercepting all frost and snow. Mentone proper, as diameter or street along the sea, is perhaps three-quarters of a mile long; a fair street of solid high houses, but part of it paved all through with big smooth whinstones, on which at evening all the population seem to gather; many asses, &c., passing home with their

burdens from the mountains, and many women, young and old with them, and thriftier, quieter, more cheerfully serious and innocent-looking set of poor people you never saw.

Old Mentone, thousands of years old (for there are caves of the troglodytes still extant near by), sprawls up like a huge *herring-bone* of lanes, steep against the cliff—by way of defence against the Saracens, it is thought; at some distance from the sea, and only hangs by New Mentone as a shoulder or fin would. Most of the poor people live there. There also in her fine church, the *Deipara misericordiarum Mater*, so called. And finally the ruins of an old castle, now mostly made into a churchyard.

English travellers went and came, all eager to have a talk with Carlyle. Lady Marian Alford and her family were a real acquisition to him; shaded over, however, unfortunately, by the death of Lord Brownlow, which occurred while he was at Mentone. Carlyle often spoke to me of this young nobleman, and of the fine promise which he had observed in him. His own spirits varied; declining slightly as the novelty of the scene wore off. To Miss Jewsbury he gave a tolerable account of himself.

I seem to be doing rather well here [he wrote], seem to have escaped a most hideous winter for one thing, if other griefs were but as easy to leave behind. The weather, ever since I awoke at Marseilles, has been *superb*; not only bright, sunny, and not wintry, but to my feeling more agreeable than any summer, so elastic, dry, and brisk is the air, an atmosphere in which you *can* take exercise, so pure and beautiful are all the elements. Sun, moon, sky and stars have not yet ceased to surprise me by their incredible brilliancy, about ten times as numerous, these stars, as yours. The sceneries all around, too, these wild and terrible Alpine peaks, all gathered to rear of us like a Sanhedrim of witches of Endor, and looking blasted, naked rock to the waist,

then all in greenish and ample petticoats of terraced olive woods, orange groves, lemon groves; very strange to me.

Shadows of the great sorrow, however, clung to him. Even the beauty was weird and ominous, and his Journal gives the picture of what was passing in him.

Journal.

Mentone, February 13, 1867. — My thoughts brood gloomily, sometimes with unspeakable tenderness, too, over the past, and what it gave me and took from me. I am best off when I get into the brown olive woods, and wander along by the rugged paths, thinking of the one, or of the many who are now *there*, safe from all sorrow, and as if beckoning to me: 'Hither friend, hither! thou art still dear to us if we have still an existence. We bid thee *hope*.' The company of nearly all my fellow-creatures here, and indeed elsewhere, is apt to be rather a burden and desecration to me. Their miserable jargoning about Ephemera and insignificances, their Reform Bills, American Nigger questions, unexampled prosperities, admired great men, &c., are unspeakably wearisome to me, and if I am bound to make any remark in answer, I feel that I was too impatient and partly unreasonable, and that the remark had better not have been made. All of this that is possible I sedulously avoid, but too much of it comes in spite of me, though fairly less here than in Chelsea. Let me be just and thankful. Surely the kindness everybody shows me deserves gratitude, too. Especially the perfect hospitality and honestly-affectionate good treatment I experience in this house, and from the wildly-generous mistress of it, is worthy of the heroic ages. That I do not quite forget, let us hope, nor shall. Oh, there have been noble exceptions among the vulgar dim-eyed greedy millions of this age; and I may say I have been well loved by my contemporaries —taken as a body corporate—thank God! And these exceptions I do perceive and admit to have been the very

flower of their generation, to be silently proud of and loyal to while I live.

March 8, 1867.—Health very bad, cough, et cetera, but principally indigestion—can have no real improvement till I see Chelsea again. Courage! get through the journey *taliter qualiter*, and don't travel any more. I am very sad and weak, but not discontented or indignant as sometimes. I live mostly alone with vanished shadows of the Past. Many of them rise for a moment inexpressibly tender. One is never long absent from me. Gone, gone, but very beautiful and dear. Eternity, which cannot be far off, is my one strong city. I look into it fixedly now and then. All terrors about it seem to me superfluous; all knowledge about it, any the least glimmer of certain knowledge, impossible to living mortal. The universe is full of love, but also of inexorable sternness and severity, and it remains for ever true that God reigns. Patience! Silence! Hope!

CHAPTER XXX.

A.D. 1867. ÆT. 72.

Return to England—Intruders in Cheyne Row—Want of employment—Settlement of the Craigenputtock estate—Charities—Public affairs—Tory Reform Bill—'Shooting Niagara'—A new horse—Visits in country houses—Meditations in Journal—A beautiful recollection.

THE party at Mentone broke up in the second week in March. Lady Ashburton went to Rome and Naples, having tried in vain to induce Carlyle to accompany her. He prepared for home again, and, shrinking from the solitude waiting him in Cheyne Row, he wrote, before leaving, to ask his brother to meet him there, with some consciousness that he had not received, as graciously as he might have done, his brother's attempts to live with him.

I am often truly grieved [he said] to think how unreasonable and unmanageable I was with you last time. Surely your sympathy was all I could have expected; and your readiness to help me was and continues far beyond what I could have expected. But perhaps with a definite period, 'one calendar month,' and each doing his wisest, we shall be able to do much better. I intend to make an effort at regulating my Chelsea affairs a little; especially sweeping my premises clean of the intolerable intrusion that torment me there. I fancy, too, I should not try again the gaunt, entirely solitary life I led latterly; but am not

certain as to getting back Maggie Welsh, or whom I should get. On these points I do not know that you could give me much advice. I only feel that it would be a kind of light amid the gloom of my arrival if, on stepping out, I found your face instead of a dead blank.

Tyndall's escort was not needed a second time. He found his way back to Chelsea without misadventure. John Carlyle was waiting as he desired, and he settled in with more composure than he had felt since his bereavement. The 'intrusions' had to be dealt with, but were not easily disposed of. Mrs. Carlyle once said she had the faculty of attracting all miserable people that wanted consolation. Carlyle seemed to attract everyone who wanted help for body or soul, or advice on the conduct of life. The number of people who worried him on such matters, most of them without a form of introduction, is hardly to be believed. Each post brought its pile of letters. One admirer wanted a situation under Government, another sent a manuscript to be read and recommended to a publisher, another complained that Nature had given him a hideous face; he had cursed his life, and cursed his mother for bearing him; what was he to do? All asked for interviews. Let them but see him, and they would convince him of their deserts. He was marvellously patient. He answered most of the letters, he saw most of the applicants. He gave advice. He gave money, infinitely too much. Sometimes, when it was beyond endurance, he would order the servant to admit no strange face at all. In such cases men would watch in the street, and pounce upon him when he came out for his walk. I have been with

him on such occasions, and have been astonished at the efforts which he would make to be kind. Once I recollect a girl, an entire stranger, wrote to him to say that in order to get books she had pawned some plate of her grandmother's. She was in danger of discovery and ruin. Would Carlyle help her to redeem it? He consulted me. A relation of mine, who lived in the neighbourhood, made inquiry, saw the girl, and found that the story was true. He replied to her letter as the kindest of fathers might have done, paid the money, and saved her from shame. Sometimes the homage was more disinterested. I had just left his door one day, when a bright eager lass of seventeen or eighteen stopped me in the Row, and asked me if Thomas Carlyle lived there. I showed her the house, and her large eyes glowed as if she was looking upon a saint's shrine. This pleased him when I mentioned it. The feeling was good and honest and deserved recognition. But altogether he was terribly worried. Intruders worried him. Public affairs worried him. Disraeli was bringing in his scandalous Reform Bill 'to dish the Whigs.' Worse than all, there was no work cut out for him, and he could make none for himself.

Journal.

Chelsea, April 4, 1867.—Idle! Idle! My employments mere trifles of business, and that of dwelling on the days that culminated on the 21st of last year. How sudden was that bereavement to me! how pathetic, touchingly and grandly fateful; in extent of importance to me how infinite! Perhaps my health is slightly mending; don't certainly know, but my spirits don't mend apparently at all. Interest, properly, I have in no living person, in no present thing.

Their 'Reform Bill,' their &c., &c. *Ach Gott!* I am disgusted if by chance I look into my newspaper, or catch a tone of the insane jargon which seems to be occupying everybody.

April 20.—What a day to look back upon! . . . Tomorrow by the day of the month, this day by the day of the week, about 3 p.m. How shall I ever learn to deal with that immense fact? I am incompetent hitherto. It overwhelms me still. I feel oftenest crushed down into contemptibility as well as sorrow. All of sunshine that remained in my life went out in that sudden moment. All of strength too often seems to have gone. Except some soft breathings of affection, of childlike grief, and once—only once that I remember, of *pious*, childlike hope in the eternity before us—my last fortnight has been the saddest, dreariest, sordidly idle, without dignity, satisfaction, or worth. I have tried too, twice over, for something of work, but all in vain. Will it be for ever in vain then? Better be silent than continue thus. . . . Were it permitted, I could pray—but to whom? I can well understand the Invocation of Saints. One's prayer now has to be voiceless, done with the heart still, but also with the hands still more.

April 21.—Abundantly downcast, dreary, sorrowful; nothing in me but sad thoughts and recollections; ennobled in part by a tenderness, a love, a pity, steeped as if in tears. Regrets also rise in me; bits of remorse which are very pungent. How *death* the inexorable, unalterable, stern *separator*, alters everything! . . . But words are of no value, and, alas! of acts I have none, or as good as none. The question, Why *am* I left behind thee? as yet nearly altogether *un*answered. Can I ever answer it? God help me to answer it. That is earnestly my prayer, and I will try and again try. Be that the annual *sacrifice* or act of *Temple worship*, on this the holiest of my now days of the year.

April 24.—Idle, sick, companionless; my heart is very heavy, as if *full* and no outlet appointed. Trial for employment continues, and shall continue; but as yet in vain. Writing is the one thing I can do; and at present what to

write of to such a set of 'readers' full of Reform Bills, Paris Exhibition, Question of Luxemburg, &c.? Sometimes poor old moorland Craigenputtock shines out on me; and our poor life there has traits of beauty in it, almost like a romance. I wish I could rise with something into the limitless Ideal, and disburden myself in rounded harmony and what poets call *song*—a fond wish indeed! But this crabbed Earth with its thunder rods and *dog grottoes*, is become homeless to me, and too mean and contradictory.

May 26.—

> To die is landing on some silent shore,
> Where billows never break nor tempests roar;
> Ere well you feel the friendly stroke, 'tis o'er.

Such a life as I now lead is painful and even disgraceful; the life of a vanquished slave, who at best, and that not always, is *silent* under his penalties and sores.

In this tragic state Carlyle found one little thing to do which gave him a certain consolation. By his wife's death he had become the absolute owner of the old estate of the Welshes at Craigenputtock. An unrelenting fatality had carried off one by one all her relations on the father's side, and there was not a single person left of the old line to whom it could be bequeathed. He thought that it ought not to lapse to his own family; and he determined to leave it to his country, not in his own name, but as far as possible in hers. With this intention he had a deed drawn, by which Craigenputtock, after his death, was to become the property of the University of Edinburgh, the rents of it to be laid out in supporting poor and meritorious students there, under the title of 'the John Welsh Bursaries.' Her name he could not give, because she had taken his own. Therefore he gave her father's.

Journal.

June 22, 1867.—Finished off on Thursday last, at three p.m., 20th of June, my poor *bequest* of Craigenputtock to Edinburgh University for bursaries. All quite ready there, Forster and Froude as witnesses; the good Professor Masson, who had taken endless pains, alike friendly and wise, being at the very last objected to in the character of 'witness,' as 'a party interested,' said the Edinburgh lawyer. I a little regretted this circumstance; so I think did Masson secretly. He read us the deed with sonorous emphasis, bringing every word and note of it home to us. Then I signed; then they two—Masson witnessing only with his eyes and mind. I was deeply moved, as I well might be, but held my peace and shed no tears. *Tears* I think I have done with; never, except for moments together, have I wept for that catastrophe of April 21, to which whole days of weeping would have been in other times a blessed relief. . . . This is my poor 'Sweetheart Abbey,' 'Cor Dulce,' or New Abbey, a sacred casket and *tomb* for the sweetest 'heart' which, in this bad, bitter world, was all my own. Darling, darling! and in a little while we shall *both* be at rest, and the Great God will have done with us what was His will.

This is very beautiful, and so is an entry which follows:—

July 14.—Her birthday. She not here—I *cannot* keep it for her now—send a poor gift to poor old Betty, who, next to myself, remembers her in lifelong love and sacred sorrow. That is all I can do. To a poor old beggar here of no value otherwise, or even of less, to whom she used to give a shilling if they met, I have smuggled a small anonymous dole—most poor, most ineffectual, sorrowful, are all our resources against the gate that is for ever shut.

This is another instance of Carlyle's charities. He remembered his wife's pensioners: but he had as long or a longer list of his own. No donation of his ever appeared in printed lists; what he gave he gave

in secret, anonymously as here, or else with his own hand as one human being to another; and of him it may be truly said that the left hand did not know what the right was doing. The undeserving were seldom wholly refused. The deserving were never forgotten. I recollect an old man, past eighty, in Chelsea, who had refused parish help, and as long as he could move earned his living by wheeling cheap crockery about the streets. Carlyle had a genuine respect for him, and never missed a chance of showing it. Money was plentiful enough *now*, as he would mournfully observe. Edition followed edition of the completed works. He had more thousands now than he had hundreds when he published 'Cromwell'—but he never altered his thrifty habits, never, even in extreme age, allowed himself any fresh indulgence. His one expensive luxury was charity.

The sad note continues to sound through the Journal. The shadow of his lost wife seemed to rise between him and every other object on which he tried to fix his thoughts. If anything like duty called to him, however, he could still respond—and the political state of England did at this time demand a few words from him. Throughout his life he had been studying the social and political problems of modern Europe. For all disorders modern Europe had but one remedy, to abolish the subordination of man to man, to set every individual free, and give him a voice in the government, that he might look after his own interests. This once secured, with free room and no favour, all would compete on equal terms, and might be expected to fall into the places which naturally belonged to them. None at any rate could then

complain of injustice; and peace, prosperity, and universal content would follow. Such was and is the theory; and if the human race, or the English race, were all wise and all good, and had unbounded territorial room over which to spread, something might be said for it. As the European world actually was, in the actual moral and material condition of European mankind, with no spiritual convictions, no sincere care for anything save money and what money could buy, this notion of universal liberty in Carlyle's opinion could end in nothing save universal wreck. If the English nation had needed governing when they had a real religious belief, now, when their belief had become conventional, they needed it, he thought, infinitely more. They could bear the degree of freedom which they had already, only in virtue of ancient habits, contracted under wiser arrangements. They would need the very best men they had among them if they were to escape the cataracts of which he heard the approaching thunder. Yet it was quite certain to him that, with each extension of the franchise, those whom they would elect as their rulers would not be fitter men, but steadily inferior and more unfit. Under any conceivable franchise the persons chosen would represent the level of character and intelligence in those who chose them, neither more nor less, and therefore the lower the general average the worse the government would be. It had long been evident to him how things were going; but every descent has a bottom, and he had hoped up to this time that the lowest point had been reached. He knew how many fine qualities the English still possessed. He did not believe that the majority were

bent of themselves on these destructive courses. If the wisest and ablest would come forward with a clear and honourable profession of their true convictions, he had considered it at least possible that the best part of the nation would respond before it was too late. The Tories had just come into office. He had small confidence in them, but they at least repudiated the new creed, and represented the old national traditions. They had an opportunity, if they would use it, of insisting that the poor should no longer be robbed by false weights and measures and adulterated goods, that the eternal war should cease between employers and employed, and the profits of labour should be apportioned by some rule of equity; that the splendid colonial inheritance which their forefathers had won should be opened to the millions who were suffocating in the fœtid alleys of our towns; that these poor people should be enabled to go where they could lead human lives again. Here, and not by ballot-boxes and anarchic liberty, lay the road to salvation. Statesmen who dared to try it would have Nature and her laws fighting for them. They might be thrown out, but they would come back again—come in stronger and stronger, for the good sense of England would be on their side.

With a languid contempt, for he half-felt that he had been indulging in a dream, Carlyle in this year found the Tories preparing to outbid their rivals, in their own arts or their own folly, courting the votes of the mob by the longest plunge yet ventured into the democratic whirlpool; and in the midst of his own grief he was sorry for his country.

There is no spirit in me to write [he notes in his

Journal], though I try it sometimes; no topic and no audience that is in the least dear or great to me. Reform Bill going its fated road, i.e. England getting into the *Niagara rapids* far sooner than I expected; even this no longer much irritates me, much affects me. I say rather, Well! why not? Is not national death, with new birth or without, perhaps preferable to such utter rottenness of national life, so called, as there has long hopelessly been. Let it come when it likes, since there are Dizzies, Gladstones, Russells, &c., triumphantly prepared to bring it in. Providence truly is skilful to prepare its instrumental men. Indeed, all England, heavily though languidly *averse* to this embarking on the Niagara rapids, is strangely indifferent to whatever may follow it. 'Niagara, or what you like, we will at least have a villa on the Mediterranean (such an improvement of climate to this), when Church and State have gone,' said a certain shining countess to me, yesterday. Newspaper editors, in private, I am told, and discerning people of every rank, as is partly apparent to myself, talk of approaching 'revolution,' 'Common wealth,' '*Common illth*,' or whatever it may be, with a singular composure.

Disraeli had given the word, and his party had submitted to be educated. Political emancipation was to be the road for them—not practical administration and war against lies and roguery. Carlyle saw that we were in the rapids, and could not any more get out of them; but he wished to relieve his own soul, and he put together the pamphlet which he called 'Shooting Niagara, and After?' When Frederick Maurice published his heresies about Tartarus, intimating that it was not a place, but a condition, and that the wicked are in Tartarus already, James Spedding observed to me that 'one was relieved to know that it was no worse.' Carlyle's Niagara, now that we are in the middle of it, seems to us for the present nothing very dreadful, and we are preparing with much

equanimity, at this moment, to go down the second cataract. The broken water, so far, lies on the other side of St. George's Channel. The first and immediate effect of the Reform Bill of 1867 was the overthrow of Protestant ascendency in Ireland. After five centuries of failure in that country, the English Protestants succeeded in planting an adequate number of loyal colonists in the midst of an incurably hostile population, and thus did contrive to exercise some peaceful influence there, and make constitutional government in that island not wholly impossible. The English Democracy, as soon as they were in possession of power, destroyed that influence. The result we have partly seen, and we shall see more fully hereafter. Carlyle, however, did not anticipate, as the consequence of the Niagara shooting, any immediate catastrophe; not even this in Ireland. He meant by it merely the complete development of the present tendency to regard money-making as the business of life, and the more rapid degradation of the popular moral character—at the end of which perhaps, but still a long way off, would be found some 'scandalous Copper Captaincy.' The believers in progress on these lines, therefore, may breathe freely, and, like Spedding, be 'glad that it is no worse.' The curious feature in the pamphlet is that Carlyle visibly underrated the disturbance to be looked for in our actual arrangements. He thought that, after the complete triumph of democracy, the aristocracy would be left in possession of their estates, and be still able to do as they pleased with them; to hunt and shoot their grouse; or, if the moors and coverts failed them, at least to subside into rat-catching. In his

Journal, September 17, 1867, there is a quotation from the 'Memoirs of St. Palaye':—'Louis XI aima la chasse jusqu'à sa mort, qui arriva en 1483. Durant sa maladie à Plessis-lès-Tours, comme il ne pouvait plus prendre ce divertisement, on attrapait les plus gros rats qu'on pouvait, et on les faisait chasser par les chats dans ses appartements, pour l'amuser.' 'Had a transient thought,' he says, 'of putting that as emblematic Finis to the hunting epoch of our vulgar noble lords.' He even considered that, if the stuff was in them, they might find a more honourable occupation. Supposing them to retain the necessary power over their properties, they might form their own domains into circles of order and cosmos, banishing *the refractory*, and thus, by drill and discipline and wise administration, introduce new elements into the general chaos. 'A devout imagination' on Carlyle's part; but an imagination merely. If it were conceivable, as it is not, that the aristocracy would prefer such an occupation to rat-catching, their success would depend on that very power of 'banishing the refractory,' of which it is certain that they would be deprived if they showed a disposition to create, in using it, an influence antagonistic to a ruling democracy. The Irish experiment does not indicate that the rights of landowners would be treated with much forbearance when the exercise of those rights was threatening a danger to 'liberty.'

'Shooting Niagara' appeared first in 'Macmillan's Magazine' for August 1867. It was corrected and republished as a pamphlet in September, and was Carlyle's last public utterance on English politics. He thought but little of it, and was aware how use-

less it would prove. In his Journal, August 3, he says:—

> An article for Masson and 'Macmillan's Magazine' took up a good deal of time. It came out mostly from accident, little by volition, and is very fierce, exaggerative, ragged, unkempt, and defective. Nevertheless I am secretly rather glad than otherwise that it is out, that the howling doggeries (dead ditto and other) should have my last word on their affairs and them, since it was to be had.

A stereotyped edition of the 'Collected Works' was now to be issued, and, conscientious as ever, Carlyle set himself to revise and correct the whole series. He took to riding again. Miss Bromley provided him with a horse called *Comet*, between whom and himself there was soon established a personal attachment, and on Comet's back, as before, he sauntered about the London environs. He described himself to Miss Bromley as very solitary, the most silent man not locked into the solitary system, to be found in all her Majesty's dominions. 'Incipient authors, beggars, blockheads, and *canaille* of various kinds,' continued their daily worries. 'Every day there was a certain loss of time in brushing off such provoking botherations;' on the whole, however, the trouble was not much.

> I find that solitude [he said] and one's own sad and serious thoughts (though sometimes in bad days it is all too gloomy) is almost as good as anything I get. The most social of mankind I could define myself, but grown old, sorrowful, and terribly difficult to please in regard to his society. I rode out on Comet to Addiscombe, stayed two hours for dinner, and rode home again by moonlight and lamplight. There are now three railways on that poor road since I was last there, and apparently 3,000 new diggings, lumber heaps

and new villas *rising*, dirty shops *risen*, and costermongers' carts, &c.—a road, once the prettiest I knew for riding, and now more like Tophet and the City of Dis than any I have tried lately. Tophet now reaches strictly to the boundary lodge of Lady A., and has much spoiled Addiscombe Farm for a tenant of my humour. 'Niagara,' I heard yesterday, is in its fourth thousand, stirring up many a dull head one hopes, and 'sweeping off the froth from the Progress Pot,' as one correspondent phrased it.

He worked hard on the 'revising' business, but felt no enthusiasm about the interest which 'his works' were exciting; 'nothing but languor, contempt, and indifference for said works—or at least for their readers *and* them.' 'The works had indeed cost him his life, and were in some measure from the heart, and all he could do. But the *readers* of them were and had been—what should he say?' and in fact 'no man's work in this world could demand for itself the smallest doit of wages, or were intrinsically better than zero. That was the fact, when one had arrived where he had arrived.' The *money* which was now coming in was actually painful.

Vanished, vanished, they that should have taken pleasure from it. Ah me! ah me! The more I look back on that thirteen years of work [over 'Frederick'], the more appalling, huge, unexampled it appears to me. Sad pieties arise to think that it did *not kill* me, that in spite of the world I got it done, and that my noble uncomplaining Darling lived to see it done. As to the English world's stupidity upon it, that is a small matter to me—or none at all for the last year and a half. That I believe is partly silence and preoccupancy; and were it *wholly* stupidity, didn't I already know how 'stupid' the poor English now are. Book is not quite zero I perceive, but will be good for something by-and-by. . . . My state of health is very miserable, though

I still sometimes think it fundamentally improving. Such a total wreck had that 'Frederick' reduced me to, followed by what had lain next in store for me. Oh, complain not of Heaven! now does my poor sinful heart almost even fall into that bad stupid sin. Oceans of unspoken thoughts—or things not yet thought or thinkable—sombre, solemn, cloudy-moonlit, infinitely sad, but full of tenderness withal, and of a love that *can* now be noble,—this, thank God, is the element I dwell in.

Journal.

Chelsea, September 30, 1867.—Nothing to mark here that is not sad and mean. Trouble with extraneous fools from all quarters; penny post a huge inlet to that class who, by hypothesis, have no respect of persons, but think themselves entitled to intrude with any or without any cause, upon the busiest, saddest, sacredest, or most important of their fellow-mortals. Fire mostly delivers us from the common run of these. . . . There is nothing of joyful in my life, nor ever likely to be; no truly *loved* or *loving* soul—or practically as good as none—left to me in the earth any more. The one object that is wholly beautiful and noble, and in any sort helpful to my poor heart, is she whom I do not name. The thought of her is drowned in sorrow to me, but also in tenderness, in love inexpressible, and veritably acts as a kind of high and sacred consolation to me amidst the intrusive basenesses and empty botherations that otherwise each day brings. I feel now and then, but repress the impatient wish, 'Let me rejoin her there in the Land of Silence, whatever it be.' Truly, if my work is *done* why should not I plainly *wish* to be there? This is very ungrateful to some of my friends I still have, some of whom are *boundlessly* kind to me; and indeed all the world, known and unknown, seems abundantly eager to do for me whatever it can, for which I have a kind of thankfulness transiently good, and ought to have more. But, alas! I *cannot* be *helped*—that is the melancholy fact.

Chelsea, October 1.—Inconceivable are the mean miseries I am in just now, about getting new clothes—almost a

surgical question with me latterly—about fitting this, contriving that; about paltry botherations with which I am unacquainted, which were once all kept aloof from me by a bright one now hidden from my eyes. . . . In fact my skin is naturally far too thin, for this 'age of progress' especially.

Chelsea, October 8.—Solitary since Thursday last altogether. Maggie went away that day, and no human voice, not even a light giggling one, sounds in this vacant house of mine. No matter that in general; but as yet I am unused to it. Sad enough I silently am. Infirmities of age crowd upon me. I am grown and growing very weak, as is natural at these years. Natural, but not joyful—life without the power of living—what a misery!

Chelsea, October 30.—Am of a sadness, and occasionally of a tenderness which surprises even myself in these late weeks—seems as if the spirit of my loved one were, in a poor metaphorical sense, always near me; all other friends gone, and solitude with her alone left me henceforth. Utterly weak health I suppose has much to do with it. Strength quite a stranger to me; digestion, &c., totally ruined, though nothing specific to complain of as dangerous or the like—and probably am too old ever to recover. Life is verily a weariness on these terms. Oftenest I feel willing to go, were my time come. Sweet to rejoin, were it only in Eternal Sleep, those that are away. That, even that, is now and then the whisper of my worn-out heart, and a kind of solace to me. 'But why annihilation or eternal sleep?' I ask too. They and I are alike in the will of the Highest. Amen.

'Niagara,' seventh thousand printed, Forster told me—well, well! Though what good is in it either?

Chelsea, November 15.—Went to Belton[1] Saturday, gone a week. Returned Saturday last, and have been slowly recovering myself ever since from that 'week of country air' and other salubrity. Nothing could excel the kindness of my reception, the nobleness of my treatment throughout. People were amiable too, and clever, some of them almost interesting, but it would not do. I, in brief, could not sleep,

[1] Lady Marian Alford's, near Grantham.

and oftenest was in secret supremely sad and miserable among the bright things going. Conclude I am not fit any longer for visiting in great houses. The futile valetting—intrusive and hindersome, nine-tenths of it, rather than helpful—the dressing, stripping and again dressing, the 'witty talk'—*Ach Gott!*—especially as crown and summary of all, the dining at 8–9 p.m., all this is fairly unmanageable by me. *Discejustitiam, monite.* Don't go back if you be wise, except it be fairly unavoidable. . . . Oh, the thoughts I had in those silent, solitary days, and how, in the wakeful French bed there, the image of another bed far away in the Abbey Kirk of Haddington, in the still infinitude of Eternity, came shooting like a javelin through my heart. Don't, don't again! All day my thoughts were of her, and there was far less of religion in them than while here.

A more interesting expedition than this to Belton was with Lord Stratford de Redcliffe to see Woolsthorpe, the birthplace of Sir Isaac Newton.

Newton (he says), who was once my grandest of mortals, has sunk to a small bulk and character with me now; how sunk and dwindled since in 1815, fifty years ago, when I sate nightly at Annan, invincibly tearing my way through that old *Principia*, often up till three a.m., without outlook or wish almost, except to master *it*, the loneliest and among the most triumphant of all young men. Newton is quite dead to me since that; and I recognise hundreds and thousands of 'greater men.' Nevertheless, he remains great in his kind, and has always *this* of supremely notable that he made the grandest discovery in science which mankind ever has achieved or can again achieve. Wherefore even I could not grudge the little pilgrimage to him.

The loneliness in Cheyne Row was not entirely unbroken this autumn. He had a visit from his brother James, 'whose honest, affectionate face enlivened the gloomy solitude for him.' James Carlyle had been rarely in London, and had 'the sights' to

see, had he cared about them. It seemed that he cared nothing for any of them, but very much for his forlorn and solitary brother, showing signs of true affection and sympathy, which were very welcome. Carlyle spoke of him as 'an excellent old Annandale specimen; my father's pupil, formed by my father's fashions, as none of the rest of us were.'

A certain attention, though growing yearly fainter, was given to the world and its affairs. The Reform Bill was producing its fruits, changes of ministry, Clerkenwell explosions, &c. &c., which brought the Irish question 'within the range of practical politics.' Carlyle observed it all with his old contempt, no longer at white heat, but warming occasionally into red.

No Fenian has yet blown us up (he wrote to Miss Bromley). I sit in speechless admiration of our English treatment of these Fenians first and last. It is as if the rats of a house had decided to expel and exterminate the human inhabitants, which latter seemed to have neither rat-catchers, traps, nor arsenic, and are trying to prevail by the 'method of love.' Better speed to them a great deal! If Walpole were to weep to the head-centres a little, perhaps it might help.

He had an old interest in Ireland. He had studied it once, with a view to writing on the subject, and was roused into disgust and scorn with this new fruit of Liberalism. But he was haunted by ghosts, and neither Ireland nor English politics could drive his sorrow out of his mind.

Journal.

November 30, 1867.—Have been remembering vividly all morning, with inexpressible emotion, how my loved one at

Craigenputtock, six or seven-and-thirty years ago, on summer mornings after breakfast used very often to come up to the little dressing-room where I was shaving and seat herself on a chair behind me, for the privilege of a little further talk while this went on. Instantly on finishing I took to my work, and probably we did not meet much again till dinner. How loving this of her, the dear one! I never saw fully till now what a trust, a kindness, love, and perfect unity of heart this indicated in her. The figure of her bright, cheery, beautiful face mirrored in the glass beside my own rugged, soapy one answering curtly to keep up her cheerful, pretty talk, is lively before me as if I saw it with eyes. Ah! and where is it now? Forever hidden from me. Forever? The answer is with God alone, and one's poor hopes seem fond and too blessed to be true. Ah me! ah me! Not quite till this morning did I ever see what a perfect love, and under such conditions too, this little bit of simple spontaneity betokened on my dear Jeannie's part. Never till her death did I see how much she loved me. . . . Nor, I fear, did she ever know (could she have seen across the stormy clouds and eclipsing miseries) what a love I bore *her*, and shall always, how vainly now, in my inmost heart. These things are beautiful, but they are unutterably sad, and have in them something considerable of remorse as well as sorrow. Alas! why does one first see fully what worth the soul's jewel had when it is gone without return? Most weak creatures are we; weak, perverse, wayward, especially weak. . . . Sometimes I call myself weak, morbid, wrong, in regard to all this. Sometimes again I feel it sordid, base, ungrateful, when all this gets smothered up in vulgar interruption, and I see it as if frozen away from me in dull thick vapour for days together. So it alternates. I pretend to no regulation of it; honestly endeavour to let it follow its own law. That is my rule in the matter. Of late, in my total lameness and impotency for work (which is a chief evil for me), I have sometimes thought, 'One thing you could do—write some record of her—make some selection of her letters which you think justly among the cleverest ever written, and which

none but yourself can quite understand. But no! but no! How speak of her to such an audience? What can it do for her or for me?

This is the first sign of the intention which Carlyle afterwards executed. How it ripened will be seen presently. Meanwhile the Journal continues:—

December 6.—I am in my seventy-third year.[1] . . . Length of days under such conditions as mine are is not a thing to be coveted, but to be humbly deprecated rather. . . . My outlook continually is all to the great change now inevitably near. The sure hope to be at rest and to be where my loved ones are (the Almighty God alone knows where or how that is, but I take it always to be a place of rest) is the only prospect of being fairly better than I have been. My work being all done, as I more and more fear it is, why should I wish to linger here? My lost bright one, all my bright ones are away—away. Society, of which I might still have plenty, does me no good whatever; frets, disgusts, and provokes me; leaves the poor disturbed heart dark and void; an unfathomable lake of sorrow lying silent under that poor foam of what is called talk, and in perhaps three cases out of four is fairly worse than solitude. 'There is no serious talk, sir,' said old Samuel; 'nobody now talks seriously'—a frightful saying, but a truer now than ever. . . . In general the talk of people suggests to me what a paltry dog-kennel of a world—now rushing fast to total anarchy and self-government by the basest—this must be; and that I am a poor old man, liable to be bored, provoked, and distressed, rather than helped any way, by his fellow-creatures. In every condition under God's sky is there not a right way of behaving under it? And is there any other item important except simply that one? Courage, hope, love to the death, and be silent in defect of speech that were good.

December 22.—'Youth,' says somebody, 'is a garland of roses.' I did not find it such. 'Age is a crown of thorns.' Neither is this altogether true for me. If sadness and sorrow

[1] His birthday was December 4.

tend to loosen us from life, they make the place of rest desirable. If incurable grief be *love* all steeped in tears, and lead us to pious thoughts and longings, is not grief an earnest blessing to us? Alas! that one is not pious always: that it is anger, bitterness, impatience, and discontent that occupies one's poor weak heart so much oftener. Some mornings ago I said to myself, 'Is there no book of piety you could still write? Forget the basenesses, miseries, and abominations of this fast sinking world—its punishment come or at hand; and dwell among the poor straggling elements of pity, of love, of awe and worship you can still discern in it! Better so. Right, surely, far better. I wish, I wish I could. Was my great grief sent to me perhaps for that end? In rare better moments I sometimes strive to entertain an imagination of that kind; but as to doing anything in consequence, alas! alas!'

'All England has taken to stealing,' says a certain newspaper for the last two weeks. Very serious, means railway swindling, official jobbery, &c. Remedy, he thinks, will be that we shall all grow as poor as Hindoos, and then be as fiercely vigilant. Would it not be *reasonabler* to find *now* your small remainder of honest people, and arm them with authority over your multitudinous knaves! Here and there we are beginning to see into the meaning of self-government by the hungry rabble.

The last stage of life's journey is necessarily dark, sad, and carried on under steadily increasing difficulties. We are alone; all our loved ones and cheering fellow-pilgrims gone. Our strength is failing, wasting more and more; day is sinking on us; night coming, not metaphorically only. The road, to our growing weakness, dimness, injurability of every kind, becomes more and more obstructed, intricate, difficult to feet and eyes; a road among brakes and brambles, swamps and stumbling places; no welcome *shine* of a *human* cottage with its hospitable candle now alight for us in these waste solitudes. Our eyes, if we have any light, rest only on the eternal stars. Thus we stagger on, impediments increasing, force diminishing, till at length there is equality

between the terms, and we do all infallibly ARRIVE. So it has been from the beginning; so it will be to the end—forever a mystery and miracle before which human intellect falls *dumb*. Do we reach those *stars* then? Do we sink in those swamps amid the dance of dying dreams? Is the threshold we step over but the *brink* in that instance, and our *home* thenceforth an infinite Inane? God, our Eternal Maker, alone knows, and it shall be as He wills, not as we would. His mercy be upon us! What a natural human aspiration!

December 30.—Ah me! Am I good for nothing then? Has my right hand—head rather—altogether lost its cunning? It is my heart that has fallen heavy, wrapt in endless sadness and a mist of stagnant musings upon death and the grave. Nothing now, no person now is beautiful to me. Nobleness in this world is as a thing of the past. I have given up England to the deaf stupidities, and to the fatalities that follow, likewise *deaf*. Her struggles, I perceive, under these nightmares, will reach through long sordid centuries. Her actual administerings, sufferings, performings, and attemptings fill me unpleasantly with abhorrence and contempt, both at once, for which reason I avoid thinking of them. 'Fenianism,' 'Abyssinian wars,' 'trades-unions,' 'philanthropic movement'—let the dead bury their dead.

One evening, I think in the spring of 1866, we two had come up from dinner and were sitting in this room, very weak and weary creatures, perhaps even I the wearier, though she far the weaker; I at least far the more inclined to sleep, which directly after dinner was not good for me. 'Lie on the sofa there,' said she—the ever kind and graceful, herself refusing to do so—'there, but don't sleep,' and I, after some superficial objecting, did. In old years I used to lie that way, and she would play the piano to me: a long series of Scotch tunes which set my mind finely wandering through the realms of memory and romance, and effectually prevented sleep. That evening I had lain but a few minutes when she turned round to her piano, got out the Thomson Burns book,

and, to my surprise and joy, broke out again into her bright little stream of harmony and poesy, silent for at least ten years before, and gave me, in soft tinkling beauty, pathos, and melody, all my old favourites: 'Banks and Braes,' 'Flowers of the Forest,' 'Gilderoy,' not forgetting 'Duncan Gray,' 'Cauld Kail,' 'Irish Coolen,' or any of my favourites tragic or comic; all which she did with a modest neatness and completeness—I might say with an honest geniality and unobtrusively beautiful perfection of heart and hand—which I have never seen equalled by the most brilliant players, among which sort she was always humbly far from ranking herself; for except to me, or some quiet friend and me, she would never play at any time.

I was greatly pleased and thankful for this unexpected breaking of the silence again, and got really a fine and almost blessed kind of pleasure out of it, a soothing and assuagement such as for long I had not known. Indeed I think it is yet the actually best little hour I can recollect since, very likely the pleasantest I shall ever have. Foolish soul! I fancied this was to be the new beginning of old days, that her health was now so much improved, and her spirits especially, that she would often do me this favour, and part of my thanks and glad speech to her went in that sense, to which I remember she merely finished shutting her piano and answered nothing. That piano has never again sounded, nor in my time will or shall. In late months it has grown clearer to me than ever that she had said to herself that night, 'I will play him his tunes all yet once,' and had thought it would be but once. . . . This is now a thing infinitely touching to me. So like her; so like her. Alas, alas! I was very blind, and might have known better how near its setting my bright sun was.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A.D. 1868. ÆT. 73.

The Eyre Committee—Disestablishment of the Irish Church—A lecture by Tyndall—Visit to Stratton—S. G. O.—Last sight of the Grange—'Letters and Memorials of Mrs. Carlyle'—Meditations in Journal—Modern Atheism—Democracy and popular orators—Scotland—Interview with the Queen—Portraits—Modern Atheism—Strange applications—Loss of use of the right hand—Uses of anarchy.

THE persecution of General Eyre had been protracted with singular virulence. He had been recalled from Jamaica. His pension was withheld, and he was financially a ruined man. The Eyre Committee continued, doing what it could for him. Carlyle was anxious as ever. I never knew him more anxious about anything. It had been resolved to present a petition in Eyre's behalf to the Government. Carlyle drew a sketch of one 'tolerably to his own mind,' and sent it to the Committee. It appeared, however, not to be to *their* minds. They thanked him, found what he said 'fine and true;' but, in short, they did not like it, and he acquiesced. His interest was not altered.

I have done my bit of duty or seeming duty (he said), and there will be no further noise from it. Eyre's self down here, visibly a brave, gentle, chivalrous, and clear man, whom I would make dictator of Jamaica for the next twenty-five years were I now king of it—has withal something of the Grandison in him, mildly perceptible. That is his limiting condition.

Occasionally and at longish intervals he allowed himself to be tempted into London society. He made acquaintance with Lord and Lady Salisbury (the father of the present lord, who died soon after), both of whom he much liked. He went one evening to the Dean of Westminster's.

Lion entertainment to Princess Helena and her Prince Christian. Innocent little Princess, has a kind of beauty, &c. One little flash of pretty pride, only one, when she rose to go out from dinner, shook her bit of *train* right, raised her pretty head (fillet of diamonds sole ornament round her hair), and sailed out. 'A princess born, you know!' looked really well, the exotic little soul. Dinner, evening generally, was miserable, futile, and cost me silent insomnia the whole night through. Deserved it, did I? It was not of my choosing—not quite.

The Irish Church fell soon after, as the first branch of the famous upas tree the hewing down of which has proved so beneficent. Carlyle had long known that the Irish Church was an anomaly, but he did not rejoice in its overthrow, each step which weakened English authority in Ireland bringing nearer the inevitable fresh conflict for the sovereignty of the island.

Irish Church Resolution passed by a great majority. *Non flocci facio.* In my life I have seen few more anarchic, factious, unpatriotic achievements than this of Gladstone and his Parliament in regard to such an Ireland as now is. Poor Gladstone! Poor old decayed Church and ditto State! But once more, *non flocci facio*, him or it. If they could abolish Parliamentary eloquence it would be worth a hundred abolitions of the Irish Church, poor old creature!

Time hung heavily at Chelsea, and the evenings were dreary. Tyndall was to lecture at the Royal

Institution on Faraday. Carlyle was not enthusiastic about science and the blessings to be expected from it; yet he was gratefully attached to Tyndall, and was persuaded to attend.

Journal.

January 27, 1868.—Attended Tyndall's lecture (on Faraday, his genius and merits), which Tyndall treated as quite heroic. A full and somewhat distinguished audience, respectful, noiseless, attentive, but not fully sympathetic, I should say; such, at least, was my own case, feeling rather that the eulogy was perhaps overdone. As to myself, 'the grandeur of Faraday's discoveries,' &c., excited in me no real enthusiasm, nor was either his faculty or his history a matter I could reckon heroic in that high degree. In sad fact, I cared but little for these discoveries—reckoned them uncertain—to my dark mind, and not by any means the kind of 'discoveries' I wanted to be made at present. 'Can you really turn a ray of light on its axis by magnetism? and if you could, what should I care?' This is my feeling towards most of the scientific triumphs and unheard of progresses and miracles so trumpeted abroad in these days, and I sadly keep it secret, a sorrowful private possession of my own. Saw a good many people there, ancient friends of mine, to whom I wished right well, but found it painful to speak beyond mere salutations. Bishop Thirlwall, Sir Henry Holland, Dean Stanley and his wife. Lecture done, I hurried away, joined by Conway, American nigger friend, innocent and patient.

February 6.—Nothing yet done, as usual. Nothing. Oh, *me miserum!* Day, and days past, unusually fine. Health in spite of sleeplessness, by no means very bad. Stand to thyself, wretched, mourning, heavy-laden creature. For others there is no want of work cut out for me. Yesterday, by our beautiful six posts, I had the following demands made upon me: To write about Sir William

Hamilton; item about Stirling, candidate for Edinburgh Professorship; item to write about poor Clough. Have as good as nothing to say either about Clough or Hamilton, though I love them both. Just before bedtime, news from a young man, son of a Mr. C——, who used to call on me, and thought well of me, that he is fallen utterly ruined into very famine, and requests that I should lend him ten pounds. Nine-tenths of the letters I get are of that tenour, not to speak of requests for autographs, exhortations to convert myself or else be ——; which latter sort, especially which last, I burn after reading the first line. So profitable have my epistolary fellow-creatures grown to me in these years, so that when the postman leaves nothing it may be well felt as an escape. I will now send young C—— 5*l.* from a 50*l.* I am steward to.

In April Lord Northbrook wrote to invite Carlyle to spend a few days with him at Stratton. He had known Lord Northbrook in the old Grange time. Stratton was not far from the Grange, and there was a sort of pleasure in the thought of seeing it again, though now in new hands. He was unwell, suffering from sorrow 'at once poignant and impotent.' In agreeing to go he forgot the approaching anniversary, the fatal April 21.

It strikes me now, with a shadow of remorse (he wrote), that Tuesday will be the 21st, and that I shall be far away from the place in Hyde Park to which I would have walked that day. I did not recollect in consenting, or perhaps I should have refused—certainly should have paused first. But alas! that is very weak too. The place, which no stranger knows of, is already quite changed: drink fountains, &c. I was there yesterday, but —— was in company. I could only linger one little instant. Ah me! how weak we are! Yesternight I read in the newspapers of an old man who had died of grief in two or three months for the loss of

his wife. They had been wedded fifty-five years. And of another in Pimlico somewhere, who, on like ground, had stabbed himself dead, finding life now unendurable.

He went to Stratton, and, except that as usual he slept badly, he enjoyed himself and 'had cause to be grateful to the kind people round him and the kind scenes he was among.' The anniversary came and went. 'All passes;' 'time and the hour wear out the gloomiest day.'

Journal.

April 27, 1868.—I was at the Grange twice over; all vacant, silent, strange like a dream; like reality become a dream. I sate in the church (Northington) with my two companions, Lords Northbrook and Sidney G. Osborne, our horses waiting the while. Church is all decorated, new-paved in encaustic, painted, glazed in coloured figures, inscribed, &c.; most clean, bright, ornate; on every pew a sprig of rosemary, &c., wholly as a Temple of the Dead. Such the piety and munificent affection of the now Dowager Lady Ashburton. I sat in silence, looking and remembering. The ride thither and back was peacefully soothing to me. Another day the two boys (Northbrook's sons) and I rode that way again; pretty galloping for most part, thither and from, by the woods, over the down, &c. Strange, strange to ride as through a dream that once was so real; pensive, serious, sombre, not painfully sorrowful to me. It is again something as if solemnly soothing to have seen all this for probably the last time.

My principal or almost sole fellow-guest at Stratton was 'the strange Rev. Lord Sidney,' named above, the famous S. G. O. of the newspapers, and one of the strangest brother mortals I ever met; a most lean, tall, and perpendicular man, face palpably aristocrat, but full of plebeian mobilities, free and easy rapidities, nice laughing little dark grey eyes, careless, honest, full of native ingenuity, sincerity, innocent vanity,

incessant talk, anecdotic, personal, distractedly speculative, oftenest purposely distracted, never altogether boring. To me his talk had one great property, it saved all task of talking on my part. He was very intrinsically polite too, and we did very well together.[1]

Proof-sheets of the new edition of his works were waiting for him on his return home. He 'found himself willing to read those books and follow the printer through them as almost the one thing he was good for in his downpressed and desolate years.' The demand for them 'was mainly indifferent' to him. What were his bits of works? What was anybody's work? 'Those whom he wished to please were sunk into the grave. The works and their praises and successes had become more and more "reminiscences" merely.' On the other hand, 'the thought of a selection from *her* letters had not yet quitted him, nor should. Could he but execute it well, and leave it legible behind him, to be printed after twenty years.'[2]

The selection and the copying was taken in hand. His passing meditations continued meanwhile to be entered in his Journal, and are increasingly interesting.

Chelsea: June 8, 1868.—One was bragging to me the other day that surely, for an item of progress, there was

[1] A letter to Miss Bromley contains a second description of the great S.G.O. 'One of the cheeriest, airiest, and talkingest lean old gentlemen I ever met with in my life; tall as a steeple, lean as a bundle of flails, full of wild ingenuity, of good humour and good purpose; a perfectly honest, human, headlong, and yet strictly aristocratic man. We smoked a great deal of tobacco together.'

[2] In his will of 1873 Carlyle says ten or seven years, and finally leaves the time of publication to me. Vide *infra*, p. 412.

a visibly growing contempt for titles, aristocratic and other.[1] I answered him yes, indeed; and a visible decay of respect or reverence for whatever is above one's own paltry self, up and up to the top of the universe even, up to Almighty God Himself even, if you will look well, which is a more frightful kind of 'progress' for you.

Seriously the *speed* with which matters are going on in this supreme province of our affairs is something notable, and sadly undeniable in late years. The name—old *Numen* withal—has become as if obsolete to the most devout of us; and it is, to the huge idly impious million of writing, preaching, and talking people as if the *fact* too had quite ceased to be certain. 'The Eternities,' 'the Silences,' &c. I myself have tried various shifts to avoid mentioning the 'Name' to such an audience—audience which merely sneers in return—and is more convinced of its delusion than ever. 'No more humbug!' 'Let us go ahead!' 'All descended from gorillas, seemingly.' 'Sun made by collision of huge masses of planets, asteroids, &c., in the infinite of space.' Very possibly say I! 'Then where is the place for a Creator?' The *fool* hath said in his heart there is no God. From the beginning it has been so, is now, and to the end will be so. The *fool* hath said it—he and nobody else; and with dismal results in our days—as in all days; which often makes me sad to think of, coming nearer myself and the end of my own life than I ever expected they would do.[2] That of the sun, and his possibly being made in that manner, seemed to me a real triumph of science, indefinitely widening the horizon of our *theological* ideas withal, and awakened a good many thoughts in me when I first heard of it, and gradually perceived that there was actual scientific basis for it—I suppose the finest stroke that 'Science,'

[1] The Parliamentary Whips on both sides are, perhaps, of a different opinion as to this supposed contempt.

[2] Carlyle did not deny his own responsibilities in the matter. In his desire to extricate the kernel from the shell in which it was rotting, he had shaken existing beliefs as much as any man, and, he admitted to me, 'had give a considerable shove to all that.'

poor creature, has or may have succeeded in making during my time—welcome to me if it be a truth—honourably welcome! But what has it to do with the existence of the Eternal Unnameable? Fools! fools! It widens the horizon of my imagination, fills me with deeper and deeper wonder and devout awe.

No prayer, I find, can be more appropriate still to express one's feelings, ideas, and wishes in the highest direction than that universal one of Pope:—

> Father of all in every age
> In every clime adored,
> By saint, by savage, and by sage,
> Jehovah, Jove, or Lord.
>
> Thou great First Cause, least *understood*,
> Who all my sense confined,
> To know but this, that Thou art good,
> And that myself am blind.

Not a word of that requires change for me at this time if words are to be used at all. The first devout or nobly thinking soul that found himself in this unfathomable universe—I still fancy with a strange sympathy the first insight his awe-struck meditation gave him in this matter. 'The Author of all this is not omnipotent only, but infinite in wisdom, in rectitude, in all noble qualities. The name of him is God (the good).' How else is the matter construable to this hour? All that is good, generous, wise, *right*—whatever I deliberately and for ever love in others and myself, who or what could by any possibility have given it to me but One who first *had* it to give! This is not logic. This is axiom. Logic to-and-fro beats against this, like idle wind on an adamantine rock. The antique first-thinker naturally gave a human personality and type to this supreme object, yet admitted too that in the deepest depths of his anthropomorphism, it remained 'inconceivable,' 'past finding out.' Let us cease to *attempt* shaping it, but at no moment forget that it veritably *is*—in this day as in the first of the days.

It was as a ray of everlasting light and insight this, that had shot itself *zenithward* from the soul of a man,

first of all truly 'thinking' men, struggling to interpret for himself the mystery of his as yet utterly dark and unfathomable world; the *beginning* of all true interpretation, a piece of insight that could never die out of the world thenceforth. Strange, high, and true to me as I consider it and figure it to myself in those strange newest days—first real aperture made through the utter darkness, revealing far aloft strange skies and infinitudes. 'Inspired by the Almighty,' men might well think. What else is it in all times that 'giveth men understanding'! This '*aperture zenithward*,' as I like to express it, has gone on slowly widening itself, with troublings and confusings of itself sad to witness, at intervals in the process all along—very witnessable even now. But it has steadily gone on, and is essentially, under conditions ever widening, our *faith*, capable of being believed by oneself alone against the whole world, this day and to the end of days.

Poor 'Comtism,' ghastliest of algebraic spectralities—origin of evil, &c.—these are things which, much as I have struggled with the mysteries surrounding me, never broke a moment of my rest.' Mysterious! be it so if you will. But is not the fact clear and certain! Is it a 'mystery' YOU have the least chance of ever getting to the bottom of! Canst *thou* by searching find out God? I am not surprised thou canst *not*, vain fool.

These things are getting to be very rife again in these late years. 'Why am *I*, the miraculously meritorious "*I*," not perfectly happy then? It would have been so easy: and see.' That I perceive is the key-note of all these vehement screechings and unmelodious, impious, scrannel pipings of poor men, verging towards *ape*hood by the Dead Sea if they don't stop short.

June 29.—The other morning a pamphlet came to me from some orthodox cultivated scholar and gentleman—strictly anonymous. Pamphlet even is not published, only printed. The many excerpts, for I read little of the rest, have struck me much. An immense development of *Atheism* is clearly proceeding, and at a rapid rate, and in joyful

exultant humour, both here and in France. Some book or pamphlet called 'The Pilgrim and the Shrine' was copiously quoted from. Pilgrim getting delivered out of his Hebrew old clothes seemingly into a Hottentot costume of *putrid tripes* hugely to his satisfaction, as appeared. French medical prize essay of young gentleman, in similar costume or worse, declaring 'we come from monkeys.' Virtue, vice are a *product*, like vitriol, like vinegar; this, and in general that human nature is rotten, and all our high beliefs and aspirations *mud!* See it, believe it, ye fools, and proceed to make yourselves happy upon it! I had no idea there was so much of this going on! The *Logic of Death* (English pamphlet) had already sold to 50,000 copies. Another English thing was a parody on the Lord's Prayer:—'Instead of praying to the Lord for daily bread, ask your fellow-workmen why wages are so low,' &c., &c.

This is a very serious omen, and might give rise to endless meditation. If they do abolish 'God' from their own poor bewildered hearts, all or most of them, there will be seen for some length of time (perhaps for several generations) such a world as few are dreaming of. But I never dread their 'abolition' of what is the Eternal *Fact* of *Facts*, and can prophesy that mankind generally will either *return* to that with new clearness and sacred purity of zeal, or else perish utterly in unimaginable depths of anarchic misery and baseness, *i.e.* sink to hell and death eternal, as our fathers said. For the rest I can rather welcome one symptom clearly traceable in the phenomenon, viz., that all people have *awoke* and are determined to have done with cants and idolatries, and have decided to die rather than live longer under that hatefullest and brutallest of sleepy Upas trees. *Euge! euge!* to begin with. And there is another thing I notice, that the chosen few who do continue to believe in the 'eternal nature of duty,' and are in all times and all places the God-appointed *rulers* of this world, will know at once who the *slave* kind are; who, if good is ever to begin, must be *excluded* totally from ruling, and in fact, be trusted only with some kind of collars round their necks.

Courage! courage always! But how deep are we to go? Through how many centuries, how many abject generations will it probably last?

September 8.—I wish Stirling[1] would turn the whole strength of his faculty upon that sad question, 'What is the origin of morals?' Saddest of all questions to the people who have *started* it again, and are evidently going to all lengths with it, to the foot of the very *gallows*, I believe, if not stopt sooner. Had I a little better health, I could almost think of writing something on it myself. Stirling probably never will, nor in fact can *metaphysics* ever settle it, though one would like to hear, as times go, what of clearest and truest poor Metaphysics had to say on it, for the multitude that put their trust in Metaphysics. If people are only driven upon virtuous conduct, duty, &c., by association of ideas, and there is no 'Infinite Nature of Duty,' the world, I should say, had better 'count its spoons' to begin with, and look out for hurricanes and earthquakes to end with. This of morality by 'association of ideas' seems to me the grand question of this dismal epoch for all thinking souls left. That of stump oratory—'oh, what a glorious speech!' &c., and the *inference* to be at *last* and now drawn from this: the *ὑπόκρισις* —*actio* of Demosthenes[2]—*ter optimum*—is the second question intimately connected with the former, and it seems to me there are no two questions so pressing upon us here and now as these two. I wish sometimes I had a little strength of body left—for the other strength is perhaps still there, as the wish, for certain, occasionally is. Wish indeed! Wishing is very cheap, and at bottom neither of these two questions is what I am most like trying at present.

This matter of the power of 'oratory' was much in Carlyle's mind at this time; for since 'Niagara' his

[1] Edinburgh Stirling, author of the 'Secret of Hegel.'

[2] Demosthenes, when asked what was the first qualification of orators, is said by Cicero to have answered *Actio*. What the second? *Actio*. What the third? *Actio*. It is usually translated action, gesture. But it means all the functions of an *actor*, gesture included. Cicero, *De Oratore*, *passim*.

chief anxiety centred there. As democracy grows intensified, the eloquent speaker who can best please the ears of the multitude on provincial platforms will more and more be the man whom they will most admire and will choose to represent them. The most eloquent will inevitably, for some time to come, be the most powerful minister in this country. It becomes of supreme importance therefore to understand what oratory is, and how far the presence of those other faculties of intellect and character which can be trusted with the administration of the Empire may be inferred from the possession of it. It was the sad conviction of Carlyle that at no time in the world's history had famous orators deserved the name of statesmen. Facts had never borne them out. They had been always on the losing side.

Victrix causa Deis placuit, sed victa Catoni.

Nor had they been themselves true men, but men who had lived in the show and outsides of things, not in the heart and essence of things. The art of speech lies in bringing the emotions to influence the judgment—to influence it by 'assuming a feeling if you have it not,' by personation, by ὑπόκρισις, the art of the stage-player. I do not suppose that Carlyle had ever read either Plato's 'Gorgias' or Aristotle's 'Politics.' But, on his own grounds, he had come to the same conclusion. Plato, Aristotle, had seen in the Greek republics the same ascendency of popular orators with which England was now menaced. It was only rarely and by accident that the power in purely democratic communities fell into the hands of men fit to hold it. The mobs of the cities chose

almost invariably men of two kinds, and neither a good one; either knaves who played upon them and led them by the nose for personal or party objects, or men who were themselves the victims of the passions to which they appealed, who lived intoxicated with their own verbosity, who had no judgment, and no criterion of truth, save that it must be something which they could persuade others to believe, and had therefore no power of recognising truth when it was put before them. From this cause more than from any other the Greek constitutions went to ruin, as the Roman did after them. The ascendency of the 'orator' was the unerring sign of the approaching catastrophe. Plato compared oratory to the art of the fashionable cook who flavoured his poisonous messes to tempt the palate. Aristotle says that all forms of government have their special parasites, which are bred by them, and destroy them. Kings and emperors are misled by favourites who flatter them. The orator is the parasite of the mob; he thrives on its favour, and therefore never speaks unpleasant truths to it. A king may be wise and may choose prudent councillors. A democracy from its nature never can. This was the opinion of the great Greeks, and Cicero, though he fought against the conviction, felt the truth of it.

The orator was like a soldier trained in the use of arms, and able to use them, either for good purposes or for bad. Antonius, the first master of the art in Rome, discusses the qualifications for success in Cicero's 'Dialogue' with delicate humour. He supposes a case where he has to persuade an audience of something which he knows to be false. Fire, he says, can

only be kindled by fire. The skilfullest acting cannot equal the fire of real conviction. But so happily, Antonius says, is the orator's nature constituted that when he has taken up a cause with eagerness he cannot help believing in it. He surrounds himself with an atmosphere of moral sentiments and commonplaces, and, being possessed with these sublime emotions, he pours them out in the triumphant confidence of a conviction, for the moment sincere.[1] Such a man, or such a species of man, is certain to be found, and certain to be in front place, omnipotent for mischief under all democratic constitutions. He leads the majority along with him, and rules by superior numbers; while to men of understanding, who are not blinded by his glowing periods, he appears, as he really is, a transparent charlatan. Demosthenes himself admitted that if he was speaking only to Plato his tongue would fail him; and it is a bad augury for any country when matters of weight and consequence are determined by arguments to which only the unintelligent can listen. The ominous ascendency of this quality, illustrated as it was in the persons of the two rival chiefs of the political parties in England, was a common topic of Carlyle's talk in his late years, and appears again and again in his diary.

Meantime his life fell back into something like its old routine. While his strength lasted he went

[1] 'Magna vis est earum sententiarum atque eorum locorum, quos agas tractesque dicendo, nihil ut opus sit simulatione et fallaciis. Ipsa enim natura orationis ejus, quæ suscipitur ad aliorum animos permovendos, oratorem ipsum magis etiam, quam quemquam eorum qui audiunt, permovet.' *De Oratore*, lib. ii. cap. 46.

annually to Scotland; never so happy as among his own kindred. Yet even among them he was less happy than sadly peaceful. 'Pity me,' he writes to Miss Bromley, September 8, 1868, from Dumfries:—

> Nay, I don't see how you are quite to avoid despising me as well. I was never so idle in my life before; but the region here is very beautiful, in the beautiful weather we again have; and to me it is not beautiful only, but almost supernatural, like the Valley of Mirza with its river and bridge. The charm of sauntering about here like a disembodied ghost, peacefully mournful, peacefully meditative, is considerable in comparison, and I repugn against quitting it.

On getting back to London he worked in earnest in sorting and annotating his wife's letters. His feeling and purpose about them, as it stood then, is thus expressed in his journal:—

> To be kept unprinted for ten to twenty years after my death, if, indeed, *printed* at all, should there be any babbling of memory still afloat about me or her. That is at present my notion. At any rate, *they shall be left legible* to such as they do concern, and shall be if I live. To her, alas! it is no service, absolutely none, though my poor imagination represents it as one, and I go on with it as something pious and indubitably *right*; that some memory and image of one so beautiful and noble should not fail to survive by *my* blame, unworthy as I was of her, yet loving her far more than I could ever show, or even than I myself knew till it was too late—*too late*.

Occasional rides on Miss Bromley's Comet formed his chief afternoon occupation; but age was telling on his seat and hand, and Comet and Carlyle's riding were both near their end.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: October 9, 1868.

Riding is now fairly over. Above a week ago I had the once gallant little Comet brought down to me here; delighted to see me the poor creature seemed. But alas! idleness, darkness, and abundant oats had undermined and hebetated and, in fact, ruined the once glorious Comet; so that in about half-an-hour, roads good, riding gentlest and carefullest, the glorious Comet splashed utterly down—cut eye, brow, and both knees—horse and rider fairly tracing out their united profile on the soil of Middlesex in the Holland House region. Silent, elegant new street, hardly anyone seeing the phenomenon. As I stuck by the horse through his sprawlings, I had come down quite gradually, right stirrup rather advanced; so that I got no injury whatever, scarcely even a little dirt. I silently perceived this must be my last ride on Comet.

The marvel was that he had been able to continue riding to so advanced an age, and had not met long before with a more serious accident. He rode loosely always. His mind was always abstracted. He had been fortunate in his different horses. They had been 'very clever creatures.' This was his only explanation.

Another incident befell him in the beginning of 1869, of a more pleasing kind. He received an intimation from Dean Stanley that her Majesty would like to become personally acquainted with a man of whom she had heard so much, and in whose late sorrows she had been so interested. He was not a courtier; no one could suspect him of seeking the favour of the great of this world, royal or noble. But for the Queen throughout his life he had enter-

tained always a loyal respect and pity, wishing only that she could be less enslaved by 'the talking apparatus' at Westminster. He had felt for her in her bereavement, as she had remembered him in his own.

The meeting was at the Westminster Deanery:—

> The Queen [he says of it] was really very gracious and pretty in her demeanour throughout; rose greatly in my esteem by everything that happened; did not fall in any point. The interview was quietly very mournful to me; the one point of real interest, a sombre thought: 'Alas! how would it have cheered her, bright soul, for my sake, had she been there!'

A less flattering distinction was Watts's portrait of him, lately finished for John Forster, and the engraving of it, which was now being proceeded with. Of the picture itself his opinion, as conveyed to his brother, was not flattering. The failure may have been due to the subject, for no painter, not even Millais, ever succeeded with Carlyle. This particular performance he calls

> Decidedly the most insufferable picture that has yet been made of me,[1] a delirious-looking mountebank full of violence, awkwardness, atrocity, and stupidity, without recognisable likeness to anything I have ever known in any feature of me. *Fuit in fatis.* What care I, after all? Forster is much content. The fault of Watts is a passionate pursuit of strength. Never mind, never mind!

In the spring he was troubled by want of sleep again; the restlessness being no doubt aggravated by the 'Letters,' and by the recollections which they called up. Public opinion, politics, the tone of the press, of literature generally, the cant of progress,

[1] Not excepting the flayed horse!

daily growing louder, all tended too to irritate him. Some scientific article, I think in the 'Fortnightly,' was 'disgusting and painful' to him; 'tells me nothing new either,' he noted, 'however logical and clear, that I did not know before, viz. that to the eye of clay spirit is for ever invisible. Pah! nasty! needless too. "A little lower than the angels," said Psalmist David; "A little higher than the tadpoles," says Evangelist ——."' 'These people,' he said to me, 'bring you what appears the whitest beautifullest flour to bake your bread with, but when you examine it you find it is *powdered glass*, and deadly poison.'

The 'Letters,' however, and his own occupation with them, were the absorbing interest, although to me at this time he never mentioned the subject.

Journal.

April 29, 1869.—Perhaps this mournful, but pious, and ever interesting task, escorted by such miseries, night after night, and month after month—perhaps all this may be wholesome punishment, purification, and monition, and again *a blessing in disguise.* I have had many such in my life. Some strange belief in an actual particular Providence rises always in me at intervals, faint but indestructible belief in spite of logic and arithmetic, which does me good. If it be true and a fact, as Kant and the clearest scientific people keep asserting, that there IS no Time and no Space, I say to myself sometimes all minor 'Logic' and counting by the fingers becomes in such provinces an incompetent thing. Believe what thou must, that is a rule that needs no enforcing.

July 24, 1869.—In spite of impediments we are now getting done with that sacred *task.* In a month more, if permitted still, I can hope to see the whole of those dear *letters* lying legible to good eyes, with the needful commentaries,

for which ought not I to be thankful as for a chosen mercy. . . . My impediments, however, have been almost desperate; ignorance, unpunctuality, sluggish torpor on the part of assistants, all hanging about my weak neck, depending on me to push it through or to leave it sticking. In fact, this has been to me a heavy-laden miserable time, *impeded* to me as none ever was by myself and *others*—others ever since October last. But I will speak of it no more. Thank God if this thing be got done.

Addiscombe seems to have been again offered to him, as an escape this summer from London, if he cared to go thither.

September 28, 1869.—The old story. Addiscombe and Chelsea alternating, without any result at all but idle misery and want of sleep, risen lately to almost the intolerable pitch. Dreary boring beings in the *lady's* time used to infest the place and scare me home again. Place *empty*, lady gone to the Highlands, and, still bountifully pressing, we tried it lately by removing bodily thither.[1] Try it for three weeks, said we, and did. Nothing but *insomnia* there, alas! Yesterday morning gone a week, we struck flag again and removed all home. Enterprise to me a total failure. . . . The *task* in a sort done, Mary finishing my notes of 1866 this very day; I shrinking for weeks past from any revisal or interference there as a thing evidently hurtful, evidently antisomnial even, in my present state of nerves. Essentially, however, her 'Letters and Memorials' are saved, thank God! and I hope to settle the details calmly, too.

This is the last mention of these 'Letters,' &c., in the Journal. I, as I said, had heard nothing about them; and though I was aware that he was engaged in some way with his autobiography, I had no conjecture as to what it was. Finished in a sort the

[1] '*We*' means himself, his brother, and his niece, Miss Mary Aitken, who was now with him.

collection was, but it needed close revision, and there was an introductory narrative still to be written. Carlyle, however, could then touch it no further, nor did a time ever come when he felt himself equal to taking it up again. It was tied together and laid aside for the present, and no resolution was then formed as to what was to be done with it.

This subject being off his mind, he was able to think more calmly of ordinary things. Ruskin was becoming more and more interesting to him. Ruskin seemed to be catching the fiery cross from his hand, as his own strength was failing. Writing this autumn to myself, he said, 'One day, by express desire on both sides, I had Ruskin for some hours, really interesting and entertaining. He is full of projects, of generous prospective activities, some of which I opined to him would prove chimerical. There is, in singular environment, a ray of real Heaven in R. Passages of that last book "Queen of the Air" went into my heart like arrows.'

The Journal during the same month becomes soft and melodious, as if the sense of a duty heroically performed had composed and consoled him.

October 6.—For a week past I am sleeping better, which is a special mercy of Heaven. I dare not yet believe that sleep is regularly coming back to me; but only tremulously hope so now and then. If it does, I might still *write* something. My poor intellect seems all here, only crushed down under a general avalanche of things *foreign* to it. Men have at one time felt that they had an immortal soul, have they not? Physical obstruction, torture of nerves, &c., carried to a certain pitch is insuperable. All the rest I could take some charge of, but this fairly beats me; and the utmost I can do—could I always achieve even that, which I

can't almost ever—is to be silent, to be inert and patient under it. The soul's sorrow that I have, too, is notable, perhaps singular. At no moment can I forget my loss, nor wish to do it if I could. Singular how the death of *one* has smitten all the Universe dead to me. Morbid? I sometimes ask, and possibly it is. But in that sadness for my loved one—to whom now sometimes join themselves my mother, father, &c.—there is a piety and silent patient tenderness which does hold of the divine. How dumb are all these things grown in the now beaverish and merely gluttonous life of man! A very sordid world, my masters! Yes. But what hast thou to do with it? Nothing. Pass on. Still save thy poor self from it if possible. . . . . Am reading Verstigan's 'Decayed Intelligence' night after night, with wonder at the curious bits of correct etymology and real sense and insight, floating about among masses of mere darkness and quasi-imbecility. It is certain we have in these two centuries greatly improved in our geologies, in our notions of the early history of man. Have got rid of MOSES, in fact, which surely was no very sublime achievement either. I often think, however, it is pretty much *all* that science in this age has done, or is doing.

October 14.—Three nights ago, stepping out after midnight, with my *final* pipe, and looking up into the stars, which were clear and numerous, it struck me with a strange new kind of feeling. Hah! in a little while I shall have seen you also for the last time. God Almighty's own Theatre of Immensity, the Infinite made palpable and visible to me, that also will be closed, flung to in my face, and I shall never behold that either any more. And I knew so little of it, real as was my effort and desire to know. The thoughts of this eternal deprivation—even of this, though this is such a nothing in comparison—was sad and painful to me. And then a second feeling rose on me, 'What if Omnipotence, which has developed in me these pieties, these reverences and infinite affections, should actually have said, Yes, poor mortals.' Such of you as have gone so far shall be permitted to go farther. Hope. Despair not! I have

not had such a feeling for many years back as at that moment, and so mark it here.

With his thoughts thus travelling into the far Infinities, Carlyle could scarcely care long, if he could care at all, for the details of the progress of English political disintegration. Yet he did observe with contemptuous indignation the development of the Irish policy by the Prime Minister, and speculated on the construction of a mind which could persuade itself and others that such a policy was right. It was the fatal oratorical faculty.

Journal.

November 11th, 1869.—If *ὑπόκρισις*, 'hypocrisy'[1] be the first, second, and third thing in eloquence, as I think it is, then why have *it* at all? Why not insist, as a first and inexorable condition, that all speech be a reality; that every speaker be verily what he pretends or play-acts to be? I can see no outlet from this. Grant the Demosthenic *dictum*, this inference, this, were there nothing else urging it, inexorably follows as the very next. Experience, too—e.g., Oliver Cromwell's speeches. So soon as by long scanning you can read them clearly, nowhere in the world did I find such persuasion, such powers of compelling belief, there and then, if you did really hear with open ear and heart. Duke of Wellington! I heard him just once for a quarter of an hour. The whole House of Lords had spoken in Melibœan strains for two or three hours; might have spoken so for two or three centuries without the least result to me. *ὑπόκρισις* not good enough. Wellington hawking, haing, humming—the worst speaker I had ever heard—etched and scratched me out gradually a recognisable *portrait of the fact*, and was the only noble lord who had *spoken* at all.[2] These are

[1] *ὑποκριτής* is the Greek word for 'actor.'

[2] This is precisely what Plato means. Truth, however plainly spoken, convinces the *intelligent*. The orator speaks *ἐν τοῖς οὐκ εἰδόσι* among the *not* intelligent, and requires something else than truth.

accurate facts familiar to my thoughts for many years back, and might be pointed out far more vividly than here in the actual features they have. Can so many doctors, solemn pedants, and professors for some 2,000 years past—can Longinus, Demosthenes, Cicero, and all the universities, parliaments, stump oratories, and spouting places in this lower world be unanimously wearing, instead of aureoles round their heads, long ears on each side of it? Unanimously sinning against Nature's fact, and stultifying and confiscating themselves and their sublime classical labours. I privately have not the least doubt of it, but possess no means of saying so with advantage. Time, I believe, will say so in the course of certain centuries or decades emphatically enough.

November 13th.—A second thing I will mark.

The quantities of potential and even consciously increasing Atheism, sprouting out everywhere in these days, is enormous. In every scientific or quasi-scientific periodical one meets it. By the last American mail I had two eloquent, determined, and calmly zealous declarations of it. In fact, there is clear prophecy to me that in another fifty years it will be the new religion to the whole tribe of hard-hearted and hard-headed men in this world, who, for their time, bear practical rule in the world's affairs. Not only all Christian churches but all Christian religion are nodding towards speedy downfall in this Europe that now is. Figure the residuum: man made chemically out of *Urschleim*, or a certain blubber called *protoplasm*. Man descended from the apes, or the shell-fish. Virtue, duty, or utility an association of ideas, and the corollaries from all that. France is amazingly advanced in that career. England, America, are making still more passionate speed to come up with her, to pass her, and be the vanguard of progress. What I had to note is this only: that nobody need *argue* with these people, or can with the least effect. Logic never will decide the matter, or will decide it—seem to decide it—their way. He who traces nothing of God in his own soul, will never find God in the world of matter—mere circlings of *force* there,

of iron regulation, of universal death and merciless indifferency. Nothing but a dead steam-engine there. It is in the soul of man, when reverence, love, intelligence, magnanimity have been developed there, that the *Highest* can disclose itself face to face in sun-splendour, independent of all cavils and jargonings. There, of a surety, and nowhere else. And is not that the real court for such a cause? Matter itself—the outer world of matter—is either Nothing or else a product due to man's *mind*. To Mind, all questions, especially this question, come for ultimate decision, as in the universal highest and final Court of Appeal. I wish all this could be developed, universally set forth, and put on its true basis. Alas! I myself can do nothing with it, but perhaps others will.

December 4th, 1869.—This is my seventy-fourth birthday. For seventy-four years have I now lived in this world. That is a fact awakening cause enough for reflection in the dullest man. . . . If this be my last birthday, as is often not improbable to me, may the Eternal Father grant that I be ready for it, frail worm that I am. Nightly I look at a certain photograph—at a certain *tomb*[1]—the last thing I do. Most times it is with a mere feeling of dull woe, of endless love, as if choked under the inexorable. In late weeks I occasionally feel able to wish with my whole softened heart —it is my only form of prayer—'Great Father, oh, if Thou canst, have pity on her and on me, and on all such.' In this at least there is no harm. The fast-increasing flood of *Atheism* on me takes no hold—does not even wet the soles of my feet. I totally disbelieve it; despise as well as abhor it; nor dread that it ever can prevail as a doom of the sons of men. Nay, are there not perhaps temporary *necessities* for it, inestimable future uses in it? Patience! patience! and hope! The new diabolic school of the French is really curious to me. Beaudelaire for example. Ode of his in 'Fraser' the other night. Was there ever anything so bright infernal? *Fleurs du Mal* indeed!

[1] Photograph of the interior of Haddington Church and Mrs. Carlyle's resting-place there.

January 21*st*, 1870.—It is notable how Atheism spreads among us in these days. ——'s protoplasm (unpleasant doctrine that we are all, soul and body, made of a kind of blubber, found in nettles among other organisms) appears to be delightful to many; and is raising a great crop of atheistic *speech* on the shallower side of English spiritualism at present. One ——, an army surgeon, has continued writing to me on these subjects from all quarters of the world a set of letters, of which, after the first two or three, which indicated an insane vanity, as of a stupid cracked man, and a dull impiety as of a brute, I have never read beyond the opening word or two, and then the signature, as prologue to immediate fire; everyone of which nevertheless gives me a moment of pain, of ghastly disgust, and loathing pity, if it be not anger, too, at this poor —— and his life. Yesterday there came a pamphlet, published at Lewes, by some moral philosopher, there called Julian, which, on looking into it, I find to be a hallelujah on the advent and discovery of atheism; and in particular, a crowning—with cabbage or I know not what—of this very ——. The real joy of Julian was what surprised me—sincere joy you would have said—like the shout of a hyæna on finding that the whole universe was actually carrion. In about seven minutes my great Julian was torn in two and lying in the place fit for him.

The 'Diabolic' sometimes visited Carlyle in actual form. One day in November this year, an apparently well-conditioned gentleman waited upon him with a request for help in some local Chelsea charity. A sovereign was at once forthcoming. The man went, and ten minutes after he discovered that the plausible stranger was a ticket-of-leave man, and that he himself had been a 'nose of wax.' Too late he remembered an air of 'varnished devilry' in the fellow. 'Well! well!' he reflected, 'you must just take your just wages whatever mortification there is.

The handsome scandalous face came back to him at night in a half-waking dream. 'Hah!' he thought, I had a personal visit of the DEVIL too, as poor St. Culm had many; and slept off with something of real pity for this miserable Devil of mine.' The fraud was itself a tribute to his known good-nature. But he had better evidences of the light in which the world now looked on him. 'The marks of respect,' he said, 'of loving regard and praise in all forms of it, that come to me here, are a surprise, an almost daily astonishment and even an embarrassment to me, though I answer uniformly nothing; so undeserved they seem, so excessive, so wildly overdone.' One letter I insert here from a person who sought him as a ghostly father under singular circumstances; an endorsement shows that he *did* answer it, though *what* he said can only be conjectured.

To Thomas Carlyle.

1869.

Sir,—As I learned from the note that Mrs. —— received from you that you were not unwilling to pay some attention to what I might have to say, I have ventured to trouble you with the following account of my wretched state. It is not without horrible misgivings that I do it. But you must know the nature of my complaint to enable you to prescribe a remedy, if remedy there be for it. Know then the secret of all my sorrows and my hardships. I am ugly—I had almost said hideous—to behold. Oh what a devilish misfortune to be sent into the world ugly. How often do I curse the day of my birth. How often do I curse the mother that brought me into this world out of nothingness into hellish misery—aye, and often do more than curse her.

I have no friends or companions; all shun and despise me. As I cannot share the pleasures and enjoyments of

those around me, I have sought to beguile away my time with books. My mental capacities are near zero, so I read them to little purpose; yet they have aroused in me dim ideas of something I cannot express—something that almost makes me glad I am in the world. I do not like to go and seek work (necessity compels me sometimes) for I cannot bear the taunts and jibes of those I work with, so I am always poor.

Oh what a devilish life is mine! You call this a God's world; if it is, I must say I am a God-forgotten mortal. You talk of big coming Eternities; you call man a Son of Earth and Heaven. I often ponder over such phrases as these, thinking to find some meaning in them that would bid me look into brighter prospects in the dark future. I, who have such a wretched life here, often try to make myself believe that there is a better life awaiting me elsewhere.

I am about twenty-five years of age. I am heartily sick of life, and I live here only because I have not the courage to die. I flatter myself that I shall yet get courage. I have become misanthropical. I hate all things. How I wish that this solid globe was shattered into fragments, and I left alone to gaze upon the ruins. Now if you could show me that I have anything to live for, that there is anything better waiting me in the 'big coming eternities,' anything that would make me bear 'the whips and scorns of time,' I will ever remember your kindness with gratitude.

I know no such hopes can be aught to me. It would have been much better that I had never been born. It is hard for me to confess all this to you—hard for me to confess it to myself. I will conclude, fearing that I have trespassed too far on your attention already.

Among the infirmities of age, a tremulous motion began to show itself in his right hand, which made writing difficult and threatened to make it impossible. It was a twitching of the muscles, an involuntary lateral jerk of the arm when he tried to use it.

And no misfortune more serious could have befallen him, for 'it came,' he said, 'as a sentence not to do any more work while thou livest'—a very hard one, for he had felt a return of his energy. 'In brighter hours he saw many things which he might write, were the mechanical means still there.' He could expand the thoughts which lay scattered in his Journal. He could occupy himself at any rate, in itself so necessary to so restless a spirit. He tried 'dictation,' but it resulted only in 'diluted moonshine.' Letters he could dictate, but nothing else, and the case was cruel.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: May 26, 1870.

Gloomy, mournful, musing, silent, looking back on the unalterable, and forward on the inevitable and inexorable. That, I know, is not a good employment, but it is too generally mine, especially since I lost the power of penmanship,[1] and have properly no means of working at my own trade, the only one I ever learned to work at. A great loss this of my right hand. Dictation I try sometimes, but never with any success, and doubt now I shall never learn it. Courage nevertheless; at least, silence in regard to that!

Another sorrow, aggravating the rest, was the death, March 20, 1870, of his dear friend Mr. Erskine of Linlathen. Erskine, 'one of the most religious men' left in Scotland, had been among the first of his countrymen to recognise Carlyle, and to see in him, across his heterodoxies, the intense 'belief' which is the essence of genuine piety. Erskine's orthodoxy, on the other hand, had been no impediment to Carlyle's affection for him.

[1] He wrote now, and as long as he could write at all, with a pencil.

On Sunday (he writes), Thomas Erskine, nearly my last Scotch friend, except my own kindred, died, weary and heavy-laden, but patient, true, and reverently peaceable to the very last. Another of my few last links severed, about which and whom the flutter to me has not yet ceased *without* or *within*. Night before last, just as I was falling asleep, vision of him in Princes Street, as if face to face; clear discernment of what a pure and beautiful and brotherly soul he had been, and that he too was away for ever, which at once awoke me again, usefully for some minutes. . . . Four years all but thirteen days I have stood contemplating my (own) calamity. Time was to bring relief, said everybody; but Time has not to any extent, nor in truth did I much wish him. No. At all hours and at all moments her transfigured spirit accompanies me, beautiful and sad; lies behind all thoughts that I have and even all *talk* that I carry on, little as my collocutors suspect. Sometimes I reflect, Is not this morbid, weak, improper? but cannot bring myself to *regret* it at any time, much less to try altering it, even if I could. The truth is, I am unable to *work*. Work is done. Self am done. My life now has nothing in it but the shadow, sad, grand, unfathomable, of what is coming—coming.

Time and sorrow had softened the angry tones of Carlyle's earlier days. The Geyser spring rarely shot up the hot stones and steam, and his talk generally was as calm as the entries in his Journal. He would still boil up under provocation, but he was sorry for it afterwards. 'Walk with Spedding last week,' he notes on the 1st of May. 'My style of talk to him so fierce, exaggerative, scornful of surrounding men and things, as is painful to me to think of now.' Far more often he was trying to see the silver lining of the cloud, and discover, even in what he most detested, the action of something good. Thus—

Journal.

April 16, 1870.—American Anarchy. Yes; it is huge, loud, ugly to soul and sense, raging wildly in that manner from shore to shore. But I ask myself sometimes, 'Could your Frederic Wilhelm, your wisest Frederic, by the strictest government, by any conceivable skill in the art of charioteering, guide America forward in what is its real task at present —task of turning a savage immensity into arability, utility, and readiness for becoming *human*, as fast and well as America itself, with its very anarchies, gasconadings, vulgarities, stupidities, is now doing? No; not by any means. That withal is perfectly clear to me this good while past. Anarchies, too, have their uses, and are appointed with cause. Our own anarchy here, ugliest of created things to me, do I not discern, as its centre and vital heart even now, the visibly increasing *hatred of mendacities*, the gradually and now rapidly spreading conviction that there can be no good got of formulas and shams; that these are good only to *abolish*, the sooner the better, toss into the fire and have done with them. True—most true! This also I see.

From this point of view even the speculative anarchy was not without its uses.

Journal.

June 23, 1870.—Book (posthumous) by a Professor Grote, sent to me. Anxious remonstrance against J. S. Mill and the Utilitarian Theory of Morals. Have looked through it seriously intent, this Grote meaning evidently well, but can't read it, nor get any good of it, except see again and ever again what the infinite bewilderment of men's minds on that subject is; lost in vortexes of Logic, bottomless and boundless, for ever incapable of settling or even elucidating such a question. He that still doubts whether his sense of right and wrong is a revelation from the Most High, I would recommend him to keep silence,

rather to do silently, with more and more of pious earnestness, what said sense *dictates* to him as right. Day by day in this manner will he do better, and also see more clearly where the sanction of his doing is, and whence derived. By pious heroic climbing of your own, not by arguing with your poor neighbours, wandering to right and left, do you at length reach the sanctuary—the victorious summit—and see with your own eyes. The prize of heroic labour, suffering, and performance this, and not a feat of dialectics or of tongue argument with yourself or with another, I more and more perceive it to be. To cease that miserable problem of the accounting for the 'moral sense' is becoming highly desirable in our epoch. Can you account for the 'sense of hunger,' for example? Don't; it is too idle; if you even could; which you never can or will, except by merely telling me in new words that it is hunger; and if, in accounting for 'hunger,' you more and more gave up eating, what would become of your philosophy and you? Cease, cease, my poor empty-minded, loud-headed, much-bewildered friends. 'Religion,' this, too, God be thanked, I perceive to be again possible, to be again *here*, for whoever will piously struggle upwards, and sacredly, sorrowfully *refuse to speak lies*, which indeed will mostly mean refuse to speak at all on that topic. No words for it in our base time. In no time or epoch can the Highest be spoken of in words—not in many words, I think, *ever*. But it can even now be silently beheld, and even *adored* by whoever has eyes and adoration, *i.e.* reverence in him. Nor, if he must be for the present lonely and[1] . . . in such act, will that always be the case? No, probably no, I begin to perceive; not always, nor altogether. But in the meanwhile Silence. Why am I writing this even here? The beginning of all is to have done with Falsity; to eschew Falsity as Death Eternal.

December 28.—I wish I had strength to elucidate and write down intelligibly to my fellow-creatures what my outline

[1] This passage, written in pencil, has been so corrected and altered as to be in parts illegible.

of belief about God essentially is. It might be useful to a poor protoplasm generation, all seemingly determined on those poor terms to try Atheism for a while. They will have to return from that, I can tell them, or go down altogether into the abyss. I find lying deep in me withal some confused but ineradicable flicker of belief that there is a 'particular providence.' Sincerely I do, as it were, believe this, to my own surprise, and could perhaps reconcile it with a higher logic than the common *draughtboard* kind. There may further be a *chessboard* logic, says Novalis. That is his distinction.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A.D. 1870. ÆT. 75.

Anne Boleyn—'Ginx's Baby'—The Franco-German war—English sympathy with France—Letter to the 'Times'—Effect of it—Inability to write—'Letters and Memorials of Mrs. Carlyle'—Disposition made of them.

I BEGIN this chapter with an opinion of Carlyle on an intricate historical problem. In studying the history of Henry VIII., I had been uncertain what to think about the trial and execution of Anne Boleyn. The story of her offences was on the face of it monstrous, and the King's marriage, following instantly on her execution, was at least strange and suspicious. On the other hand, it was hard to believe that Commissions of Enquiry, Judges, juries, the Privy Council, and finally, Parliament, which was specially summoned on the occasion, could have been the accomplices of a wanton crime; and the King in ordinary prudence would have avoided insulting the common sense and conscience of the realm, if he knew that she had been falsely accused, and would have at least waited a decent period before taking a new wife. I did not know till I had finished my book, that the despatches of Eustace Chapuys, the Imperial Ambassador resident at the time in London, had been preserved at Vienna. I went thither to examine them

in the spring of 1870, and I published extracts from them afterwards in 'Fraser's Magazine.' Chapuys's account, though it leaves the question of Anne's guilt still uncertain, yet reveals a mass of intrigue, political and personal, in Henry's court, which made it seem possible, for the first time to me, that the poor Queen might have been innocent, yet that the King and Parliament might have honestly believed her guilty. During violent revolutions, men can believe anything that falls in with their prevailing passions. I talked the subject over with Carlyle after my return. In the summer he went to Scotland, where the magazine, with the letters in it, reached him; and he wrote thus to me:—

The Hill, Dumfries: August 14, 1870.

As to Anne Boleyn, I find still a considerable want of perfect clearness, and, without that, the nearest approach I made to clearness about her was in the dialogue we had one day before Chapuys came out. Chapuys rather sent me to sea again, and dimmed the matter. I did not quite gather from him what I did from you—the frantic, fanatical, rabid, and preternatural state of 'public opinion.' This I had found to be quite the illuminative lamp of the transaction, both as to her conduct and to every one's . . . and such in fact it still continues, on the faith of what you said, and inclines me to *believe*, on all the probabilities I have, that those adulterous abominations, even the caitiff lute-player's part,[1] are most likely altogether lies upon the poor lady.

This was Carlyle's judgment, formed on such data as I could give him on this difficult matter. I added what more I had to say upon it in an appendix to the next edition of my work.

Carlyle enjoyed Scotland this year. He described

[1] Mark Smeton, who confessed to the adultery.

his life to me as 'encircled in cotton, such the unwearied kindness and loving patience of his sister's household with him.' To Miss Bromley he wrote: 'The incomparable freshness, the air on the hillside, and the luxurious beauty of these old hills and dales all round, so silent, yet so full of voices, strange and sacred, mournfully audible to one's poor old heart, are evidently doing me day by day some little good; though I have sad fighting with the quasi-infernal ingredient—the railway whistle, namely—and have my difficulties and dodgings to obtain enough of sleep.'

Miss Bromley had sent him a book which pleased him.

To Miss Bromley.

The Hill: July 11.

'Ginx's Baby' is capital in its way, and has given great satisfaction here. The writing man is rather of penny-a-liner habits and kind, but he slashes along swift and fearless, sketching at arm's length, as with a burnt stick on a cottage wall, and sketches and paints for us some real likeness of the sickening and indeed horrible anarchy and godless negligence and stupor that pervades British society, especially the lowest, largest, and most neglected class; no legislator, people's William or official person, ever casting an eye in that direction, but preferring to beat the wind instead. God mend it! I perceive it will have to try mending *itself* in altogether terrible and unexpected ways before long, if everybody takes the course of the people's William upon it. This poor penny-a-liner is evidently sincere in his denunciation and delineation, and, one hopes, may awaken here and there some torpid soul, dilettante M.P. or the like, to serious reflection on what *is* the one thing needful at this day, in Parliament and out of it, if he were wise to discern.

Alas! it is above thirty years since I started the Con-

dition of England question as well worthy of considering, but was met with nothing but angry howls and Radical Ha, ha's! And here the said question still is, untouched and ten times more unmanageable than then. Well, well! I return you Ginx, and shut up my lamentations.

To me he wrote something in the same strain, *à propos* of some paper of mine on the colonies:—

People's William and all the parties to so unspeakable a plan of 'management' and state of things, to me are unendurable to think of. Torpid, gluttonous, sooty, swollen, and squalid England is grown a phenomenon which fills me with disgust and apprehension, almost desperate, so far as it is concerned. What a base, pot-bellied blockhead this our heroic nation has become; sunk in its own dirty fat and offal, and of a stupidity defying the very gods. Do not grow desperate of it, you who have still a hoping heart, and a right hand that does not shake.

The finer forces of nature were not sleeping everywhere, and Europe witnessed this summer, in the French and German war, an exhibition of Divine judgment which was after Carlyle's own heart. So suddenly too it came; the whole sky growing black with storm, and the air ablaze with lightning, 'in an hour when no man looked for it.' France he had long known was travelling on a bad road, as bad as England's, or worse. The literature there was 'a new kind of Phallus-worship, with Sue, Balzac, and Co. for prophets, and Madame Sand for a virgin.' The Church getting on its feet again, with its Pope's infallibility, &c., was the re-establishment of exploded lies. As the people were, such was their government. The 'Copper Captain,' in his eyes, was the abomination of desolation, a mean and perjured adventurer. He had known him personally in his old London days,

and had measured his nature. Prince Napoleon had once spent an evening in Cheyne Row. Carlyle had spoken his mind freely, as he always did, and the Prince had gone away inquiring 'if that man was mad.' Carlyle's madness was clearer-sighted than Imperial cunning. He regarded the Emperor's presence on a throne which he had won by so evil means as a moral indignity, and had never doubted that in the end Providence would in some way set its mark upon him. When war was declared, he felt that the end was coming. He had prophesied, in the 'Life of Frederick,' that Prussia would become the leading State of Germany, perhaps of Europe. Half that prophecy had been fulfilled already through the war of 1866. The issue of the war with France was never for a moment doubtful to him, though neither he nor any one could foresee how complete the German victory would be. He was still in Scotland when the news came of Gravelotte and Sedan, and I had this letter from him:—

September 1870.—Of outward events the war does interest me, as it does the whole world. No war so wonderful did I ever read of, and the results of it I reckon to be salutary, grand, and hopeful, beyond any which have occurred in my time. Paris city must be a wonderful place to-day. I believe the Prussians will certainly keep for Germany what of Elsass and Lorraine is still German, or can be expected to *re-become* such, and withal that the whole world cannot forbid them to do it, and that Heaven will not (nor I). Alone of nations, Prussia seems still to understand something of the art of governing, and of fighting enemies to said art. Germany, from of old, has been the peaceablest, most pious, and in the end most valiant and terriblest of nations. Germany ought to be President of Europe, and

will again, it seems, be tried with that office for another five centuries or so.

In September Carlyle came back to Chelsea, still eagerly watching the events of the war.

Journal.

October 3.— State of France, lying helpless, headless even, but still braggart in its ignominy under the heel of Prussia, is full of interest even to me. What will become of the mad country next? Paris, shut up on every side, can send no news except by balloon and carrier-pigeons. The country is without any visible government. A country with its *head cut off*; Paris undertaking to 'stand siege;' the voice of France a confused babblement from the gutters, scarcely human at all, you would say, so dark, ignorant, mad do they seem. This is her *first* lesson poor France is getting. It is probable she will require many such. For the last twenty years I have been predicting to myself that there might lie ahead for a nation so full of mad and loud oblivion of the laws of this universe, a destiny no better than that of Poland. Its *strongest* bond, I often guess, is probably the fine and graceful *language* it has got to speak, and to have so many neighbours learn; one great advantage over Poland, but not an all-availing one. Peace with Prussia, by coming in Prussia's 'will,' as the Scotch say, is the first result to be looked for; after which Duc d'Aumale or d'Orleans for a while? Republic for a while? None knows, except that it can only be for a while; that 'anarchies' are not permitted to exist in this universe, and that nothing not anarchic is possible in such a France as now is. *N'importe; n'importe.* Poor France! Nay, the state of England is almost still more hideous to me; base exceedingly, to all but the flunkey and the penny editors, and given up to a stupidity which theologians might call judicial!

It will be remembered that Russia took advantage of the state of Europe and tore the article in the

Treaty of Paris which limited her Black Sea fleet. When the article was drawn, the essentially temporary character of it was well understood; but England bristled up when the trophies of her Crimean glories were shattered and flung in her face so cavalierly; for a week or two there was talk of war again between us and Russia.

Quarrel (Carlyle said) mad as a March hare, if it don't confine itself to the able editors, which who can be sure of? Never thou mind. England seems to be all pretty *mad*. Perhaps God will be merciful to her: perhaps *not*, too; for her impious stupidities are and have been many. . . .

Ten days ago read Gladstone's article in the 'Edinburgh Review' with amazement. Empty as a *blown* goose-egg. Seldom have I read such a ridiculous solemn addle-pated *Joseph Surface* of a thing. Nothingness or near it conscious to itself of being greatness almost unexampled. Thanks to 'parliamentary eloquence' mainly, and *its* value to oneself and others. According to the People's William, England, with himself atop, is evidently even now *at the top of the world*. Against bottomless *anarchy* in all fibres of her, spiritual and practical, she has now a completed ballot-box, can vote and count noses, free as air. Nothing else wanted, clearly thinks the People's William. He would ask you, with unfeigned astonishment, 'What else?' 'The sovereign'st thing in nature is *parmaceti*' (*read* ballot) 'for an inward bruise.' That is evidently his belief, what he finds believable about this universe, in England A.D. 1870. Parmaceti! Parmaceti! Enough of him and of it.

France had so clearly been the aggressor in the war with Germany that the feeling in England at the outset had been on the German side. The general belief, too, had been that France would win. Sympathy, however, grew with her defeats. The English are always restive when other nations are fighting,

and fancy that they ought to have a voice in the settlement of every quarrel. There is a generous disposition in us, too, to take the weaker side; to assume that the stronger party is in the wrong, especially if he takes advantage of his superiority. When Germany began to formulate her terms of peace, when it became clear that she meant, as Carlyle foretold, to take back Elsass and Lorraine, there was a cry of spoliation, sanctioned unfortunately in high Liberal quarters where the truth ought to have been better known. A sore feeling began to show itself, aggravated perhaps by the Russian business, which, if it did not threaten to take active form, encouraged France to prolong its resistance. The past history of the relations between France and Germany was little understood in England. Carlyle perhaps alone among us knew completely how France had come by those essentially German provinces, or how the bill was now being presented for payment which had been running for centuries. To allay the outcry which was rising he reluctantly buckled on his armour again. With his niece's help he dictated a long letter to the 'Times,' telling his story simply and clearly, without a trace of mannerism or exaggeration. It appeared in the middle of November, and at once cooled the water which might otherwise have boiled over. We think little of dangers escaped; but wise men everywhere felt that in writing it he had rendered a service of the highest kind to European order and justice. His own allusions to what he had done are slight and brief. As usual he thought but little of his own performance.

To John Carlyle.

November 12, 1870.

Poor Mary and I have had a terrible ten days, properly a 'Much Ado about Nothing.' It concerned only that projected letter to the newspapers about Germany. With a right hand valid and nerves in order I might have done the letter in a day, but with nerves all the contrary, and *no* right hand, it was all different. Poor Mary had endless patience, endless assiduity; wrote like a little fairy; sharp as a needle, and all that could be expected of her when it came to writing: and before that there was such a hauling down of old forgotten books, &c., in all which my little helpmate was nimble and unwearied. In fine, we have got the letter done and fairly sent away last night. I do not reckon it a good letter, but it expresses in a probably too emphatic way what my convictions are, and is a clearance to my conscience in that matter whether it do good or not, whether it be good or not.

Journal.

November 21.—Wrote, with much puddle and confused bother, owing to mutinous right hand mainly, a letter to the 'Times' on the French-German question, dated ten days ago, published in 'Times' of November 18. Infinite jargon in newspapers seemingly, and many scrubby notes knocking at this door in consequence. Must last still for a few days —*in* a few days will pass away like a dust-cloud.

Not scrubby notes only, but 'a rain of letters, wise, foolish, sane, mad,' streamed in upon Cheyne Row during the next few weeks. Some were really interesting, coming from German soldiers serving in the trenches before Paris, grateful to the single Englishman who could feel for them and stand up for them. On the 25th a telegram was forwarded to him by the Prussian Ambassador, with a note from

himself. The terms of the message I do not know, nor by whom it was sent. The nature of it, however, may be inferred from the words of Count Bernstorff.

Prussia House, Carlton House Terrace,
November 25, 1870.

Sir,—I received yesterday evening the enclosed telegram for you from Hamburg, and I am much gratified to be able to avail myself of the opportunity of forwarding it to you, and of expressing to the celebrated historian my entire concurrence in the thankfulness of my countrymen.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
BERNSTORFF.

In fact Carlyle's letter had most effectually answered its purpose. There was no more talk of English interposition. M. Thiers came over to beg for help; if not material, at least moral. We had to decline to interfere, and France was left to its fate—a fate terrible beyond Carlyle's expectation, for Paris, after being taken by the Germans, had to be recovered again out of the hands of the French Commune amidst the ashes of the Tuileries, and a second 'September' massacre, to be avenged by a massacre in turn. On these horrors there is a pregnant passage in a letter of his to his brother. He saw, when no one else saw it, the coming greatness of Prussia. Perhaps he saw other things equally correctly which no one else can see.

To John Carlyle.

May 29, 1871.

I am much in the dark about the real meaning of all these quasi-infernal Bedlamisms, upon which no newspaper that I look into has anything to say except 'horrible,'

'shameful,' and 'O Lord, I thank thee that we Englishmen are not as other men.' One thing I can see in these murderous ragings by the poorest classes in Paris, that they are a tremendous proclamation to the upper classes in all countries: 'Our condition, after eighty-two years of struggling, O ye quack upper classes, is still unimproved; more intolerable from year to year, and from revolution to revolution; and by the Eternal Powers, if you cannot mend it, we will blow up the world, along with ourselves and you.'

It was Carlyle's deliberate conviction that a fate like that of Paris, and far worse than had yet befallen Paris, lay directly ahead of all great modern cities, if their affairs were allowed to drift on under *laissez-faire* and so-called Liberty.

But the world and its concerns, even Franco-German wars and Paris revolutions, could not abstract his mind, except fitfully, from the central thoughts which occupied his heart. His interest had essentially gone from the Present to the Past and Future, the Past so painfully beautiful, the Future with the veil over it which no hand had lifted or could lift. Could he but hope to see *her* once more, if only for five minutes? By the side of this the rest was nothing.

In the midst of the echoes from the battlefields he writes:—

Journal.

October 11, 1870.—Very sad, sunless, is the hue of this now almost empty world to me. World about to vanish for me in Eternities that cannot be known. Infinite longing for my loved ones—towards Her almost a kind of mournful worship—this is the one celestial element of my new existence; otherwise in general 'wae and weary'—'wae and

weary.' Not even the amazing German-French war, grandest and most beneficent of Heavenly providences in the history of my time, can kindle me, except for a short while.'

Again, soon after Count Bernstorff's note :—

Journal.

December 15, 1870.—How pungent is remorse, when it turns upon the loved dead, who cannot pardon us, cannot hear us now! Two plain precepts there are. Dost thou intend a kindness to thy beloved one? Do it straightway, while the fateful Future is not yet here. Has thy heart's friend carelessly or cruelly stabbed into thy heart. Oh, forgive him! Think how, when thou art dead, he will punish himself. True precepts—clear dictates of prudence both, yet how often neglected!

In the following spring there are the saddest notices of the failure of his hand, as if he was still eager to write something, but could not :—

Loss of my right hand for writing with—a terrible loss. Never shall I learn to write by dictation, I perceive. Alas! alas! for I might still work a little if I had my hand, and the night cometh wherein no man can work.

And a fortnight later :—

June 15, 1871.—Curious to consider the institution of the Right hand among universal mankind; probably the very oldest human institution that exists, indispensable to all human co-operation whatsoever. He that has seen three mowers, one of whom is left-handed trying to work together, and how impossible it is, has witnessed the simplest form of an impossibility, which but for the distinction of 'right hand' would have pervaded all human things. Have often thought of all that—never saw it so clearly as this morning while out walking, unslept and dreary enough in the windy sunshine. How old? Old! I wonder if there is any people barbarous enough not to have this distinction

of hands; no human Cosmos possible to be even begun without it. Oldest Hebrews, &c. writing from right to left, are as familiar with the world-old institution as we.

Why that particular hand was chosen is a question not to be settled, not worth asking except as a kind of riddle: probably arose in fighting; most important to protect your heart and its adjacencies, and to carry the shield in that hand.

This is very characteristic of Carlyle, who went always to the heart of every subject which occupied him. But his particular occupation with it at that moment, and his impatience with his inability to write, perhaps arose from an eagerness to leave complete, with a fitting introduction, the letters and memorials of his wife, before making a final disposition of the manuscript. He could not do it. He was conscious that he would never be able to do it, and that he must decide on some other course. I was still his constant companion, but up to this time he had never mentioned these memoirs to me. Of her he spoke continually, always in the same remorseful tone, always with bitter self-reproach; but of the monument which he had raised to her memory he had never spoken at all. One day—the middle or end of June, 1871—he brought, himself, to my house a large parcel of papers. He put it in my hands. He told me to take it simply and absolutely as my own, without reference to any other person or persons, and to do with it as I pleased after he was gone. He explained, when he saw me surprised, that it was an account of his wife's history, that it was incomplete, that he could himself form no opinion whether it ought to be published or not, that he could do no more to it, and must pass it over to me. He wished

never to hear of it again. I must judge. I must publish it, the whole, or part—or else destroy it all, if I thought that this would be the wiser thing to do. He said nothing of any limit of time. I was to wait only till he was dead, and he was then in constant expectation of his end. Of himself he desired that no biography should be written, and that this Memoir, if any, should be the authorised record of him. So extraordinary a mark of confidence touched me deeply, but the responsibility was not to be hastily accepted. I was then going into the country for the summer. I said that I would take the MS. with me, and would either write to him or would give him an answer when we met in the autumn.

On examining the present which had been thus singularly made to me I found that it consisted of a transcript of the 'Reminiscence' of Mrs. Carlyle, which he had written immediately after her death, with a copy of the old direction of 1866, that it was not to be published; two other fragmentary accounts of her family and herself; and an attempt at a preface, which had been abandoned. The rest was the collection of her own letters, &c.—almost twice as voluminous as that which has been since printed—with notes, commentaries, and introductory explanations of his own. The perusal was infinitely affecting. I saw at once the meaning of his passionate expressions of remorse, of his allusions to Johnson's penance, and of his repeated declaration that something like it was due from himself. He had never properly understood till her death how much she had suffered, and how much he had himself to answer for. She, it appeared, in her young days had aspired after literary distinction.

He had here built together, at once a memorial of the genius which had been sacrificed to himself, and of those faults in himself which, though they were faults merely of an irritable temperament, and though he extravagantly exaggerated them, had saddened her married life. Something of this I had observed, but I had not known the extent of it; and this action of Carlyle's struck me as something so beautiful, so unexampled in the whole history of literature, that I could but admire it with all my heart. Faults there had been; yes, faults no doubt, but such faults as most married men commit daily and hourly, and never think them faults at all: yet to him his conduct seemed so heinous that he could intend deliberately that this record should be the only history that was to survive of himself. In his most heroic life there was nothing more heroic, more characteristic of him, more indicative at once of his humility and his intense truthfulness. He regarded it evidently as an expiation of his own conduct, all that he had now to offer, and something which removed the shadow between himself and her memory. The question before me was whether I was to say that the atonement ought not to be completed, and that the bravest action which I had ever heard of should be left unexecuted, or whether I was to bear the reproach, if the letters were given to the world, of having uncovered the errors of the best friend that I had ever had. Carlyle himself could not direct the publication, from a feeling, I suppose, of delicacy, and dread of ostentation. I could not tell him that there was nothing in his conduct to be repented of, for there was much, and more than I had guessed; and I had

again to reflect that, if I burnt the MS., Mrs. Carlyle had been a voluminous letter-writer, and had never been reticent about her grievances. Other letters of hers would infallibly in time come to light, telling the same story. I should then have done Carlyle's memory irreparable wrong. He had himself been ready with a frank and noble confession, and the world, after its first astonishment, would have felt increased admiration for the man who had the courage to make it. I should have stepped between him and the completion of a purpose which would have washed his reputation clear of the only reproach which could be brought against it. Had Carlyle been an ordinary man, his private life would have concerned no one but himself, and no one would have cared to inquire into it. But he belonged to the exceptional few of whom it was certain that everything that could be known would eventually be sifted out. Sooner or later the whole truth would be revealed. Should it be told voluntarily by himself, or maliciously by others hereafter? That was the question.

When I saw him again after the summer we talked the subject over with the fullest confidence. He was nervously anxious to know my resolution. I told him that, so far as I could then form an opinion, I thought that the letters *might* be published, provided the prohibition was withdrawn against publishing his own Memoir of Mrs. Carlyle. That would show what his feeling had really been, and what she had really been, which also might perhaps be misconstrued. It would have been hard on both of them if the sharp censures of Mrs. Carlyle's pen had been

left unrelieved. To this Carlyle instantly assented. The copy of the Memoir had indeed been given to me among the other papers, that I might make use of it if I liked, and he had perhaps forgotten that any prohibition had been attached, but I required, and I received, a direct permission to print it. The next question was about the time of publication. On the last page of the MS. was attached a pencil note naming, first, twenty years after his death. The 'after my death' had been erased, but the twenty years remained. Though I was considerably younger than he was, I could not calculate on living twenty years, and the letters, if published at all, were to be published by me. When he had given them to me in June he had told me only that I was to wait till he was gone. He said now that ten years would be enough—ten years from that time. There were many allusions in the letters to people and things, anecdotes, criticisms, observations, written in the confidence of private correspondence, which ought not to be printed within so short a time. I mentioned some of these, which he directed me to omit.

On these conditions I accepted the charge, but still only hypothetically. It had been entrusted to me alone, and I wished for further advice. He said that if I was in a difficulty I might consult John Forster, and he added afterwards his brother John. John Carlyle I had never an opportunity of consulting. I presumed that John Carlyle was acquainted with his brother's intentions, and would communicate with me on the subject if he wished to do so; but I sent the manuscript to Forster, that I might learn generally his opinion about it. Forster

had been one of Mrs. Carlyle's dearest friends, much more intimate with her than I had been. He, if any one, could say whether so open a revelation of the life at Cheyne Row was one which ought to be made. Forster read the letters. I suppose that he felt as uncertain as I had done, the reasons against the publication being so obvious and so weighty. But he admired equally the integrity which had led Carlyle to lay bare his inner history. He felt as I did, that Carlyle was an exceptional person, whose character the world had a right to know, and he found it difficult to come to a conclusion. To me at any rate he gave no opinion at all. He merely said that he would talk to Carlyle himself, and would tell him that he must make my position perfectly clear in his will, or trouble would certainly arise about it. Nothing more passed between Forster and myself upon the subject. Carlyle, however, in the will which he made two years later bequeathed the MS. to me specifically in terms of the tenderest confidence. He desired that I should consult Forster and his brother when the occasion came for a final resolution; but especially he gave the trust to me, charging me to do my best and wisest with it. He mentioned seven years or ten from that date (1873) as a term at which the MS. might be published; but, that no possible question might be raised hereafter on that part of the matter, he left the determination of the time to myself, and requested others to accept my judgment as his own.

Under these conditions the 'Letters and Memorials' remained in my hands. At the date of his will of 1873 he adhered to his old resolution, that of himself there

should be no biography, and that these letters and these letters alone should be the future record of him. Within a few weeks or months, however, he discovered that various persons who had been admitted to partial intimacy with him were busy upon his history. If he was to figure before the world at all after his death he preferred that there should be an authentic portrait of him; and therefore at the close of this same year (1873) again, without note or warning, he sent me his own and his wife's private papers, journals, correspondence, 'reminiscences,' and other fragments, a collection overwhelming from its abundance, for of his letters from the earliest period of his life his family and friends had preserved every one that he had written, while he in turn seemed to have destroyed none of theirs. 'Take them,' he said to me, 'and do what you can with them. All I can say to you is, Burn freely. If you have any affection for me, the more you burn the better.'

I burnt nothing, and it was well that I did not, for a year before his death he desired me, when I had done with these MSS. to give them to his niece. But indeed everything of his own which I found in these papers tended only to raise his character. They showed him, in all his outward conduct, the same noble, single-minded, simple-hearted, affectionate man which I myself had always known him to be; while his inner nature, with this fresh insight into it, seemed ever grander and more imposing.

The new task which had been laid upon me complicated the problem of the 'Letters and Memorials.' My first hope was, that, in the absence of further definite instructions from himself, I might interweave

parts of Mrs. Carlyle's letters with his own correspondence in an ordinary narrative, passing lightly over the rest, and touching the dangerous places only so far as was unavoidable. In this view I wrote at leisure the greatest part of 'the first forty years' of his life. The evasion of the difficulty was perhaps cowardly, but it was not unnatural. I was forced back, however, into the straighter and better course.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A.D. 1872. ÆT. 77.

Weariness of life—History of the Norse Kings—Portrait of John Knox—Death of John Mill and the Bishop of Winchester—Mill and Carlyle—Irish policy of Mr. Gladstone—The Prussian Order of Merit—Offer of the Grand Cross of the Bath—Why refused—Lord Beaconsfield and the Russo-Turkish war—Letter to the 'Times.'

CARLYLE lived on after this more easy in his mind, but otherwise weary and 'heavy laden'; for life, after he had lost the power of working, was become a mere burden to him. Often and often he spoke enviously of the Roman method of taking leave of it. He had read of a senator in Trajan's time who, slipping upon the pavement from infirmity, kissed the ground, exclaiming 'Proserpine, I come!' put his house in order, and ended. Greatly Carlyle approved of such a termination, and regretted that it was no longer permitted. He did not conceive, he said, that his Maker would resent the voluntary appearance before Him of a poor creature who had laboured faithfully at his task till he could labour no more. He made one more effort to produce something. He had all along admired the old Norsemen, hard of hand and true of speech, as the root of all that was noblest in the English nation. Even the Scandinavian gods were nearer to him than the Hebrew. With someone to write for him, he put together a sketch of the Norse

kings. The stories, as he told them to me, set off by his voice and manner, were vigorous and beautiful; the end of Olaf Trygveson, for instance, who went down in battle into the fiord in his gilded armour. But the greater part of them were weakened by the process of dictation. The thing, when finished, seemed diluted moonshine, and did not please him.

Journal.

February 15, 1872.— Finished yesterday that long rigmarole upon the Norse Kings. Uncertain now what to do with it; if not at once throw it into the fire. It is worth nothing at all, has taught me at least how impossible the problem is of writing anything in the least *like myself* by dictation; how the presence of a third party between my thoughts and me is fatal to any process of clear thought.

He wrote also a criticism on the portraits of John Knox, in which he succeeded in demolishing the authority of the accepted likenesses, without, however, completely establishing that of another which he desired to substitute for them. He had great insight into the human face, and into the character which lay behind it. 'Aut Knox aut Diabolus,' he said, in showing me the new picture; 'if not Knox who can it be? A man with that face left his mark behind him.' But physiognomy may be relied upon too far, and the outward evidence was so weak that in his stronger days he would not have felt so confident.

This, with an appendix to his 'Life of Schiller,' was the last of his literary labours. He never tried any thing again. The pencil entries in the Journal grew scantier, more illegible, and at last ceased altogether

The will was resolute as ever, but the hand was powerless to obey. I gather up the fragments that remain.

July 12, 1872.—A long interval filled only with pitiful miseries and confusions best *forgotten*. Empty otherwise, except for here and there an hour of serious, penitent reflection, and of a sorrow which could be called loving, calm, and in some sort sacred and devout! Pure clear *black* amidst the general muddy gloom. Item, generally if attainable, two hours (after 10.30 P.M.) of reading in some really good book—Shakespeare latterly—which amidst the silence of all the Universe is a useful and purifying kind of thing. Reminiscences too without limit. Of prospects nothing possible except what has been common to me with all wise old men since the world began. Close by lies the *great secret*, but impenetrable (is, was, and must be so) to terrestrial thoughts for evermore. Perhaps something! Perhaps *not* nothing, after all. God's will, there also, be supreme. If we are to meet! Oh, Almighty Father, if we are, but silence! silence!

The end of the summer of 1872 was spent at Seaton with Lady Ashburton, whose affectionate care was unwearied. In a life now falling stagnant it is unnecessary to follow closely henceforth the occupation of times and seasons. The chief points only need be now noted. The rocket was burnt out and the stick falling. In November of that year Emerson came again to England, and remained here and on the Continent till the May following. He had brought his daughter with him, and from both of them Carlyle received a faint pleasure. But even a friend so valued could do little for him. His contemporaries were dropping all round; John Mill died; Bishop Wilberforce died; everyone seemed to die except himself.

Journal.

June 9, 1873.—'More and more dreary, barren, base, and ugly seem to me all the aspects of this poor diminishing quack world—fallen openly anarchic—doomed to a death which one can only wish to be speedy. . . . Death of John Mill at Avignon about a month ago, awakening what a world of reflections, emotions, and remembrances, fit to be totally kept silent in the present mad explosion (among the maddest I have seen about anyone) of universal threnodying penny-a-linism; not at any time a melodious phenomenon.'

I had myself written to him on the Bishop of Winchester's death. He answered:—

July 29, 1873.—'I altogether sympathize in what you say of poor Sam of Winchester. The event is pitiful, tragical, and altogether sadder to me than I could have expected. He was far from being a bad man, and was a most dexterous, stout, and clever one, and I have often exchanged pleasant dialogues with him for the last thirty years—finished now—silent for all eternity! I find he was really of religious nature, and thought in secret, in spite of his bishophood, very much in regard to religion as we do.

His remarks on Mill and Mill's autobiography are curious.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: May 10, 1873.

Yesterday, on stepping out into the street, I was told that John Mill was dead. I had heard no whisper of such a thing before; and a great black sheet of mournful, more or less tragic, memories—not about Mill alone—rushed down upon me. Poor Mill! He too, has worked out his life drama in sight of me; and that scene has closed too before my old eyes—though he was so much my junior. Goose N. came down to me to day—very dirty—very enthusiastic—very stupid and confused, with a daily newspaper 'containing two

articles, ineffably sublime and heart-interesting upon Mill.' Two more blustrous bags of empty wind I have seldom read. 'Immortal fame!' 'First spirit of his age!' 'Thinker of thinkers!' What a piece of work is man with a penny-a-liner pen in his hand.

To the Same.

November 5.

'You have lost nothing by missing the autobiography of Mill. I have never read a more uninteresting book, nor I should say a sillier, by a man of sense, integrity, and seriousness of mind. The penny a-liners were very busy with it, I believe, for a week or two, but were evidently pausing in doubt and difficulty by the time the second edition came out. It is wholly the life of a logic-chopping engine, little more of human in it than if it had been done by a thing of mechanized iron. Autobiography of a steam-engine, perhaps, you may sometimes read it. As a mournful psychical curiosity, but in no other point of view, can it interest anybody. I suppose it will deliver us henceforth from the cock-a-leerie crow about 'the Great Thinker of his Age.' Welcome, though inconsiderable! The thought of poor Mill altogether, and of his life and history in this poor muddy world, gives me real pain and sorrow.

Such a sentence, so expressed, is a melancholy ending to the affectionate intimacy which had once existed between Mill and Carlyle. At heart, perhaps, they remained agreed—at least as much agreed as Carlyle and Bishop Wilberforce could have been; both believed that the existing social arrangements in this country were incurably bad, that in the conditions under which the great mass of human beings in all civilised countries now lived, moved, and had their being, there was at present such deep injustice that the system which permitted such things could not

be of long endurance. Carlyle felt this to his latest hours. Without justice society is sick, and will continue sick till it dies. The modern world, incapable of looking duty in the face, attempts to silence complaint with issuing flash-notes on the Bank of Liberty, and will leave all men free to scramble for as much as they can secure of the swine's trough. This is the notion which it forms to itself of justice, and of the natural aid which human beings are bound to give to one another. Of the graces of mutual kindliness, of the dignity and beauty which rise out of organically-formed human society, it politically knows nothing, and chooses to know nothing. The battle is no longer, even to the strong, who have, at least, the one virtue of courage; the battle is to the cunning, in whom is no virtue at all. In Carlyle's opinion no remedy lay in political liberty. Anarchy only lay there, and wretchedness, and ruin. Mill had struck into that road for himself. Carlyle had gone into the other. They had drifted far apart, and were now separated for ever. Time will decide between them. Mill's theory of things is still in the ascendant. England is moving more eagerly than ever in the direction of enfranchisement, believing that there lies the Land of Promise. The orators echo Mill's doctrines: the millions listen and believe. The outward aspect of things seems to say that Mill did, and that Carlyle did not, understand the conditions of the age. But the way is long, the expected victories are still to be won—are postponed till the day when 'England, the mother of free nations, herself is free.' There are rapids yet to be stemmed, or cataracts to descend, and it remains uncertain

whether on arriving (if we do arrive) at a finished democracy, it will be a land flowing with milk and honey, or be a waste heaving ocean strewed with the wrecks of dead virtues and ruined institutions.

Carlyle was often taunted—once, I think, by Mr. Lecky—with believing in nothing but the divine right of strength. To me, as I read him, he seems to say, on the contrary, that, as this universe is constructed, it is 'right' only that is strong. He says himself:—

> With respect to that poor heresy of might being the symbol of right 'to a certain great and venerable author,' I shall have to tell Lecky one day that quite the converse or *re*verse is the great and venerable author's real opinion—namely, that right is the eternal symbol of might: as I hope he, one day descending miles and leagues beyond his present philosophy, will, with amazement and real gratification, discover; and that, in fact, he probably never met with a son of Adam more contemptuous of might except where it rests on the above origin.

Old and weary as he was, the persistent belief of people in the blessings of democracy, and the confidence which they gave to leaders who were either playing on their credulity or were themselves the dupes of their own phrases, distressed and provoked Carlyle. He was aware that he could do nothing, that self-government by count of heads would be tried out to the end before it would be abandoned; but in his conversation and letters he spoke his opinions freely—especially his indignation at the playing with fire in Ireland, which the great popular chief had begun.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: March 7, 1873.

The whole world is in a mighty fuss here about Gladstone and his Bill:[1] the attack on the third branch of the Upas Tree, and the question what is to become of him in consequence of it. To myself from the beginning it seemed the consummation of contemptibilities and petty trickeries on his part, one of the most transparent bits of thimblerigging to secure the support of his sixty Irish votes, the Pope's brass band, and to smuggle the education violin into the hands of Cullen and the sacred sons of Belial and the scarlet woman, I had ever seen from him before.

And again:—

March 23, 1873.

Gladstone appears to me one of the contemptiblest men I ever looked on. A poor Ritualist; almost spectral kind of phantasm of a man—nothing in him but forms and ceremonies and outside wrappages; incapable of seeing veritably any fact whatever, but seeing, crediting, and laying to heart the mere clothes of the fact, and fancying that all the rest does not exist. Let him fight his own battle, in the name of Beelzebub the god of Ekron, who seems to be his God. Poor phantasm!

He was better pleased with a lecture on English notions of government, delivered by Sir James Stephen, at the Philosophical Institution, at Edinburgh:—

I found it (he says, November 15) a very curious piece indeed, delineating one of the most perfect dust-whirls of Administrative Nihilism, and absolute absurdities and impotences, more like an electric government apparatus for Bedlam, elected and submitted to by Bedlam, than any sane apparatus ever known before. And strangely enough it is interlarded with the loyallest assurances every now and then that it is the

[1] Irish Education Bill.

one form of government for us for an indefinite period, and that no change for the better can be practically contemplated. He is a very honest man, Stephen, with a huge heavy stroke of work in him.

Of Stephen, Ruskin, and one or two others, Carlyle could still think with a degree of comfort. He would gladly have struck one more blow against 'things not true;' for his intellect was strong as ever and his sight as piercing; but he sadly found that it was not to be. On December 6 he made the last pencil entry, or the last that is legible, in his Journal. From this time his hand failed him entirely, and the private window that opened into his heart was closed up—no dictation being there admissible.

December 6, 1873.—Day before yesterday was my poor birthday, attended with some ceremonial greetings and more or less sincere expressions of regard. Welcome these latter, though unimportant. To myself the serious and solemn fact, 'Thy seventy-eighth year is finished then.' Nor had that in it an impressiveness of too much depth; perhaps rather of too little. A life without work in it, as mine now is, has less and less worth to me; nay, sometimes a feeling of disgrace and blame is in me; the poor soul still vividly enough alive, but struggling in vain under the strong imprisonment of the dying or half-dead body. For many months past, except for idle *reading*, I am pitifully idle. Shame, shame! I say to myself, but cannot help it. Great and strange glimpses of thought come to me at intervals, but to prosecute and fix them down is denied me. Weak, too weak, the flesh, though the spirit is willing.

He seemed to be drifting calmly towards the end, as if of outward incidents or outward activities there would be nothing more to record. But there was still something wanting, and he was not to leave the

world without an open recognition of his services to mankind. In January 1874, there came a rumour from Berlin that Prussia proposed to reward the author of the 'Life of Frederic the Great,' by conferring on him the Order of Merit, which Frederic himself had founded. Possibly the good turn which he had done to Germany by his letter during the siege of Paris, might have contributed to draw the Emperor's attention to him. But his great history, translated and universally accepted by Frederic's countrymen as the worthiest account of their national hero, was itself claim sufficient without additional motive. Carlyle had never been ambitious of public honours. He had never even thought of such things, and the news, when it first reached Cheyne Row, was received without particular flutter of heart. 'Were it ever so well meant,' he said, 'it can be of no value to me whatever. Do thee neither ill na gude.' The Order of Merit was the most flattering distinction which could have been offered him, for it really means 'merit,' and must be earned, even by the Princes of the Blood. Of course he could not refuse it, and, at the bottom, I am sure that he was pleased. Yet it seemed as if he would not let himself enjoy anything which *she* was no longer alive to enjoy with him.

The day before yesterday (he tells his brother on the 14th of February) his Prussian Excellency forwarded to me by registered parcel all the documents and insignia connected with our sublime elevation to the Prussian Order of Merit. Due reply sent; and so we have done, thank Heaven, with this sublime nonentity. I feel about it, after the fact is over, quite as emphatically as I did at first,—that had they sent me a quarter of a pound of good tobacco, the addition

to my happiness would probably have been suitabler and greater.

To his friends this act of the German Government was a high gratification, if to himself it was a slight one. The pleasure which men receive from such marks of respect is in most cases 'satisfied vanity'; and Carlyle never thought of his own performances, except as 'duty' indifferently done.

We, however, were all glad of it, the more so because I then believed that when I wrote his life I should have to say that although for so many years he had filled so great a place amongst us, and his character was as noble as his intellect, the Government, or Governments, of his own country—Tory, Liberal, or whatever they might be—had passed him over without notice. The reproach, however—for reproach it would have been—was happily removed while there was yet time.

It is rather for their own sakes, than for the recipients of their favours, that Governments ought to recognise illustrious services. The persons whom they select for distinction are a test of their own worth.

Everyone remembers the catastrophe of 1874. Mr. Gladstone, but lately 'the people's William,' the national idol, was flung from his pedestal. The country had wearied of him. Adulation had soured into contempt, and those who had chanted his praises the loudest professed, like the Roman populace on the fall of Sejanus, that they had never admired him at all. At the time, the general opinion was that his star had set for ever, and Carlyle thought so too till

he saw who it was that the people had chosen to replace him. His mind misgave him then that the greater faults of his successor would lift Mr. Gladstone back again to a yet more giddy eminence and greater opportunities of evil. But this was not the world's impression, and Carlyle tried to hide it from himself as long as he could. Little sanguine as he was, he flattered himself at the time of the election that the better spirit of ancient England was awake again, that she had sickened of her follies and was minded in earnest to put a curb between the teeth of anarchy. It was a bright flash of hope, and might have been more than a hope if the Conservatives could have wisely used the chance which was once more offered them. Unfortunately, the conditions of the time permitted only the alternative of Mr. Disraeli and Mr. Gladstone—products, both of them, of stump oratory. From the author of the Reform Bill of 1867 he could only look for stage tricks or illusions. No wise action could come of such a man, and the pendulum would too surely swing back to its old place. Of the two, however, since one or the other was inevitable, he liked Disraeli the best. Disraeli, though he might delude the world, did not delude himself, and could see facts as they were if he cared to see them. At any rate there was a respite from the disintegrating process, and he might hope to live out his remaining years unvexed by any more of it.

Mr. Disraeli could not have been unaware of the unfavourable light in which he was regarded by Carlyle, but he by no means reciprocated the feeling. He was essentially goodnatured, as indeed Carlyle always acknowledged, and took any blow that might

be aimed at him with undisturbed composure. He had been a man of letters before he was a politician. He was proud of his profession and of the distinction which he had himself conquered as a novelist. He was personally unacquainted with Carlyle; they had moved in different circles, and I believe had never met. But in early life he had been struck with the 'French Revolution;' he had imitated the style of it, and distinctly regarded the author of that book as the most important of living writers. Perhaps he had heard of the bestowal of the Order of Merit, and had felt that a scandal would rest on England if a man whom Germany could single out for honour was left unnoticed in his own land. Perhaps the consideration might have been forced upon him from some private source. At any rate, he forgot, if he had ever resented, Carlyle's assaults upon him, and determined to use his own elevation as Premier to confer some high mark of distinction on a person who was so universally loved and admired. It was indeed time, for Carlyle hitherto had been unnoticed entirely, and had been left without even the common marks of confidence and recognition which far inferior men are seldom without an opportunity of receiving. He would not have accepted a pension even when in extremity of poverty. But a pension had never been offered. Eminent men of letters were generally appointed trustees of the British Museum; Carlyle's name had not been found among them. The post of Historiographer Royal for Scotland had been lately vacant. This, at least, his friends expected for him; but he had been intentionally passed over. The neglect was now atoned for.

The letters which were exchanged on this occasion are so creditable to all persons concerned, that I print as many of them as I possess complete—*in perpetuam rei memoriam.*

To Thomas Carlyle, Esq.

(Confidential.) Bournemouth: December 27, 1874.

Sir,—A Government should recognise intellect. It elevates and sustains the tone of a nation. But it is an office which, adequately to fulfil, requires both courage and discrimination, as there is a chance of falling into favouritism and patronising mediocrity, which, instead of elevating the national feeling, would eventually degrade or debase it. In recommending Her Majesty to fit out an Arctic Expedition, and in suggesting other measures of that class, her Government have shown their sympathy with Science; and they wish that the position of High Letters should be equally acknowledged; but this is not so easy, because it is in the necessity of things that the test of merit cannot be so precise in literature as in science. When I consider the literary world, I see only two living names which I would fain believe will be remembered, and they stand out in uncontested superiority. One is that of a poet—if not a great poet, a real one; the other is your own.

I have advised the Queen to offer to confer a baronetcy on Mr. Tennyson, and the same distinction should be at your command if you liked it; but I have remembered that, like myself, you are childless, and may not care for hereditary honours. I have, therefore, made up my mind, if agreeable to yourself, to recommend to Her Majesty to confer on you the highest distinction for merit at her command, and which, I believe, has never yet been conferred by her except for direct services to the State, and that is the Grand Cross of the Bath.

I will speak with frankness on another point. It is not well that in the sunset of your life you should be disturbed

by common cares. I see no reason why a great author should not receive from the nation a pension, as well as a lawyer or statesman. Unfortunately, the personal power of Her Majesty in this respect is limited; but still it is in the Queen's capacity to settle on an individual an amount equal to a good fellowship; and which was cheerfully accepted and enjoyed by the great spirit of Johnson and the pure integrity of Southey.

Have the goodness to let me know your feelings on these subjects.

I have the honour to remain, Sir,
Your faithful Servant,
B. DISRAELI.

To the Right Hon. B. Disraeli.

5, Cheyne Row, Chelsea:
December 29, 1874.

Sir,—Yesterday, to my great surprise, I had the honour to receive your letter containing a magnificent proposal for my benefit, which will be memorable to me for the rest of my life. Allow me to say that the letter, both in purport and expression, is worthy to be called magnanimous and noble, that it is without example in my own poor history; and I think it is unexampled, too, in the history of governing persons towards men of letters at the present, as at any time; and that I will carefully preserve it as one of the things precious to memory and heart. A real treasure or benefit *it*, independent of all results from it.

This said to yourself and reposited with many feelings in my own grateful mind, I have only to add that your splendid and generous proposals for my practical behoof, must not any of them take effect; that titles of honour are, in all degrees of them, out of keeping with the tenour of my own poor existence hitherto in this epoch of the world, and would be an encumbrance, not a furtherance to me; that as to money, it has, after long years of rigorous and frugal, but also (thank God, and those that are gone before me) not

degrading poverty, become in this latter time amply abundant, even superabundant; more of it, too, now a hindrance, not a help to me; so that royal or other bounty would be more than thrown away in my case; and in brief, that except the feeling of your fine and noble conduct on this occasion, which is a real and permanent possession, there cannot anything be done that would not now be a sorrow rather than a pleasure.

With thanks more than usually sincere,
I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obliged and obedient servant,
T. CARLYLE.

To the Countess of Derby.

5, Cheyne Row, Chelsea:
December 30, 1874.

Dear Lady,—As I believe you to have been the originator, contriver, and architect of this beautiful air mansion intended for my honour and benefit, and as the Premier's letter appears to me very beautiful on his part, I venture directly to send you a correct copy of that and of my answer to it, which I really had a regret in feeling obliged to write; that is to say, in reducing so splendid an edifice of the generous mind to inexorable nothing; though I do say still, and will say it, the generous intention, brought ready for fulfilment from such a quarter, will ever remain a beautiful and precious possession for me.

Mr. Disraeli's letter is really what I called it, magnanimous and noble on his part. It reveals to me, after all the hard things I have said of him, a new and unexpected stratum of genial dignity and manliness of character which I had by no means given him credit for. It is, as my penitent heart admonishes me, a kind of 'heaping coals of fire on my head;' and I do truly repent and promise to amend. For the rest, I naturally wish there should be as little as possible said about this transaction, though almost inevitably the

secret will ooze out at last. In the meanwhile silence from us all. . . .

Forgive this loose rambling letter. Write no answer to it till your own time come, and on the whole forgive me my sins generally, or think of me as mercifully as you can. With my respectful compliments to Lord Derby, and most loyal wishes that all good may be with you and yours,

I remain, dear Lady,
Your attached and most obedient,
T. CARLYLE.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: January 1, 1875.

The enclosed letter and copy of my answer ought to go to you as a family curiosity and secret. Nobody whatever knows of it beyond our two selves here, except Lady Derby, whom I believe to have been the contriver of the whole affair. You would have been surprised, all of you, to have found unexpectedly your poor old brother converted into Sir Tom; but alas! there was no danger at any moment of such a catastrophe. I do, however, truly admire the magnanimity of Dizzy in regard to me. He is the only man I almost never spoke of except with contempt; and if there is anything of scurrility anywhere chargeable against me, he is the subject of it; and yet see, here he comes with a pan of hot coals for my guilty head. I am, on the whole, gratified a little within my own dark heart at this mark of the good-will of high people—Dizzy by no means the chief of them—which has come to me now at the very end, when I can have the additional pleasure of answering, 'Alas, friends! it is of no use to me, and I will not have it.' Enough, enough! Return me the official letter, and say nothing about it beyond the walls of your own house.

The Government was unwilling to accept the refusal, and great private efforts were tried to induce him to reconsider his resolution. It was intimated

to him that Her Majesty herself would regret to be deprived of an opportunity of showing the estimation which she felt for him. But the utter unsuitableness of a 'title of honour' to a person of his habits and nature, was more and more obvious to him. 'The Grand Cross,' he said to me, 'would be like a cap and bells to him.' And there lay below a yet prouder objection. 'You accepted the Order of Merit?' I said. 'Yes,' he answered, 'but that is a reality, never given save for merit only; while this ——.' The Prussian Order besides did not require him to change his style. It would leave him, as it found him, plain Thomas Carlyle.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: January 30, 1875.

I have not been worse in health since you last heard; in fact, usually rather better; and at times there come glimpses or bright reminiscences of what I might, in the language of flattery, call health—very singular to me now, wearing out my eightieth year. It is strange and wonderful to feel these glowings out again of intellectual and spiritual clearness, followed by base physical confusions of feeble old age; and, indeed, daily I am taught again the unfathomable mystery of what we call a soul, radiant with heaven, yet capable of being overclouded and, as it were, swallowed up by the bottomless mud it has to live in, in this world. . . . There has been again a friendly assault made upon me, Disraeli himself the instigator, in regard to the celebrated 'baronetcy' affair. There was first a letter from Lady Derby. Then there duly came the interview of Wednesday, with a great deal of earnest and friendly persuasion to accept some part or other of the Ministerial offers. Then at last, when all had to be steadfastly declined as an evident superfluity and impropriety, a frank confession from her ladyship that

I had done well to answer No in all particulars. The interview was not painful to me, but rather the contrary; though I really was sorry to disappoint—as it appeared I should do—both Disraeli and a much higher personage, Queen's Majesty herself, namely. Lady D. had at once permission from me to break the secret of the matter, and to tell or publish whatever she pleased of the truth about it.

So this small circumstance ended. The endeavour to mark his sense of Carlyle's high deserts, which no other Premier had thought of noticing, will be remembered hereafter to Lord Beaconsfield's credit, when 'peace with honour' is laughed at or forgotten. The story was a nine days' wonder, with the usual conflict of opinion. The final judgment was perhaps most completely expressed to me by the conductor of an omnibus: 'Fine old gentleman that, who got in along with you,' said he to me, as Carlyle went inside and I mounted to the roof; 'we thinks a deal on him down in Chelsea, we does.' 'Yes,' I said, 'and the Queen thinks a deal on him too, for she has just offered to make him a Grand Cross.' 'Very proper of she to think of it,' my conductor answered, 'and more proper of he to have nothing to do with it. Tisn't that as can do honour to the likes of he.'

More agreeable to Carlyle were the tributes of respect which poured in upon Cheyne Row when the coming December brought his 80th birthday. From Scotland came a gold medal; from Berlin two remarkable letters. I have copies of neither, and therefore cannot give them. One was from a great person whom I do not know; the other was from Prince Bismarck, written in his own large clear hand, which

Carlyle showed me, but I dare not reproduce it from recollection.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: December 4, 1875.

There has been this morning a complete whirlwind of birthday gifts and congratulations about the poor arrival of my eightieth and probably last 4th of December. Prince Bismarck, you will observe, thinks it is my seventieth birthday, which is enough to quench any vanity one might have on a missive from such a man; but I own to being truly pleased with the word or two he says about 'Frederick the Great,' which seems to me a valuable memorial and certificate of the pains I took in the matter, not unwelcome in the circumstances.

The Scotch medal too was an agreeable tribute, due, he believed, to the kind exertions of Professor Masson. But he was naturally shy, and disliked display when he was himself the object of it. The excitement worried him. He described it as 'the birthday of a skinless old man; a day of the most miserable agitation he could recollect in his life. 'The noble and most unexpected note from Bismarck,' he said, 'was the only real glad event of the day. The crowd of others, including that of the Edinburgh medal, was mere fret and fuss to me, intrinsically of no value at all, at least till one had time to recognise, from the distance, that kindness and goodwill had lain at the heart of every part of it.'

'Kindness and goodwill,' yet not in the form which he could best have welcomed. The respect of the nineteenth century, genuine though it be, takes the colours of the age, and shows itself in testimonials, addresses, compliments. 'They say I am a

great man now, he observed to me, 'but not one of them believes my report; not one of them will do what I have bidden them do.'

His time was chiefly passed in reading and in dictating letters. He was still ready with his advice to all who asked for it, and with help when help was needed. He walked in the mornings on the Chelsea Embankment. 'A real improvement that,' as he reluctantly admitted. In the afternoon he walked in the park with me or some other friend; ending generally in an omnibus, for his strength was visibly failing. At the beginning of 1876, Mr. Trevelyan brought out his Life of his uncle, and sent Carlyle a copy. 'It promises,' he writes to his brother, to give a recognisable likeness of the great Thomas Babington, whom, to say truth, I never could in any way deeply admire, or at all believe in, except to a very shallow extent. You remember bringing me his first 'Edinburgh Review' essay,[1] one night from Annan to the Gill, and reading it with me before going to bed. I think that was the only thing of his I ever read with lively satisfaction. Did you know that Macaulay is understood to signify 'the son of Olaf'; Aulay Macaulay—Olaf, son of Olaf? Olaf Trygveson would surely be much surprised to see some of the descendants he has had. It is a most singular biography, and psychologically may be considered the most curious ever written. No man known to me in present or past ages ever had, with a peaceable composure too, so infinite a stock of good conceit of himself. Trevelyan has done his task cleverly and well. I finished it with a rather sensible increase of wonder at the

[1] On Milton.

natural character of him, but with a clearer view than ever of the limited nature of his world-admired talent.'

Many letters have been sent to me from unknown correspondents—young men probably who had been diverted from clericalism by reading his books—and had consulted Carlyle in their choice of a life. Here is one. I would give many more had I room for them, for they are all kind and wise.

Chelsea: March 30, 1876.

Dear Sir,—I respect your conscientious scruples in regard to choosing a profession, and wish much I had the power of giving you advice that would be of the least service. But that, I fear, in my total ignorance of yourself and the posture of your affairs, is pretty nearly impossible. The profession of the law is in many respects a most honourable one, and has this to recommend it, that a man succeeds there, if he succeeds at all, in an independent and manful manner, by force of his own talent and behaviour, without needing to seek patronage from anybody. As to ambition, that is, no doubt, a thing to be carefully discouraged in oneself; but it does not necessarily inhere in the barrister's profession more than in many others, and I have known one or two who, by quiet fidelity in promoting justice, and by keeping down litigation, had acquired the epithet of the 'honest lawyer,' which appeared to me altogether human and beautiful.

Literature, as a profession, is what I would counsel no faithful man to be concerned with, except when absolutely forced into it, under penalty, as it were, of death. The pursuit of culture, too, is in the highest degree recommendable to every human soul, and may be successfully achieved in almost any honest employment that has wages paid for it. No doubt, too, the Church seems to offer facilities in this respect; but I will by no means advise you to overcome your reluctance against seeking refuge *there*. On the whole there is nothing strikes me as likelier for one of your

disposition than the profession of teacher, which is rising into higher request every day, and has scope in it for the grandest endowments of human faculties (could such hitherto be got to enter it), and of all useful and fruitful employments may be defined as the usefullest, fruitfullest, and also indispensablest in these days of ours.

Regretting much that I can help you so infinitely little, bidding you take pious and patient counsel with your own soul, and wishing you with great truth a happy result,

I remain, dear Sir,

Faithfully yours,

T. CARLYLE.

Thus calmly and usefully Carlyle's later years went by. There was nothing more to disturb him. His health (though he would seldom allow it) was good. He complained of little, scarcely of want of sleep, and suffered less in all ways than when his temperament was more impetuously sensitive. One form of sorrow—inevitable when life is far prolonged, that of seeing those whom he had known and loved pass away—this he could not escape. In February, 1876, John Forster died, the dearest friend that he had left. I was with him at Forster's funeral in Kensal Green; and a month later at the funeral of Lady Augusta Stanley at the Abbey.

In April his brother Alick went, far off in Canada.

April 22, 1876.—Poor Alick! he writes: He is cut away from us, and we shall behold his face no more, nor think of him as being of the earth any more. The much-struggling, ever true and valiant brother is for ever gone. To himself in the state he was in, it can be considered only as a blessed relief, but it strikes me heavily that he is gone before myself; that I, who should in the course of nature

have gone before him, am left among the mourners instead of being the mourned.

Young Alick's account of his death is altogether interesting—a scene of sublime simplicity, great and solemn under the humblest forms. That question of his, when his eyes were already shut, and his mind wavering before the last *finis* of all:—'Is Tom coming from Edinburgh the morn?'[1] will never leave me should I live a hundred years. Poor Alick, my ever faithful brother! Come back across wide oceans and long decades of time to the scenes of brotherly companionship with me, and going out of the world as it were with his hand in mine. Many times he convoyed me to meet the Dumfries coach, or to bring me home from it, and full of bright and perfect affection always were those meetings and partings.

Though he felt his life to be fast ebbing, he still watched the course of things outside him. He had, as has been seen, been touched by Mr. Disraeli's action towards him, but it had not altered in the least his distrust of Disraeli's character; and it was thus with indignation, but without surprise, that he found him snatch the opportunity of the Russian-Turkish War to prepare to play a great part in European politics. It was the curse of modern English political life, as Carlyle saw it, that Prime Ministers thought first of their party, and only of the wellbeing of their country as wrapped up in their party's triumph. Mr. Gladstone had sacrificed the loyal Protestants in Ireland for the Catholic vote. Disraeli was appealing to the traditions of the Crimean War, the most foolish enterprise in which England had ever been engaged, to stir the national vanity and set the world on fire,

[1] Alluding to the old times when Carlyle was at the University and his brother would be looking out for him at vacation time.

that he and his friends might win a momentary popularity. That any honour, any benefit to England or to mankind, could arise from this adventure, he could neither believe himself nor do Disraeli so much injustice as to suppose that he believed it. Lord Palmerston, a chartered libertine, had been allowed to speak of the Turks as 'the bulwark of civilisation against barbarism.' There was no proposition too absurd for the unfortunate English people to swallow. Disraeli was following on the same lines; while the few decently informed people, who knew the Turks, knew that they were the barbarians, decrepit, and incurable; that their presence in Europe was a disgrace; that they had been like a stream of oil of vitriol, blasting every land that they had occupied. And now we were threatened with war again, a war which might kindle Europe into a blaze; in defence of this wretched nation. The levity with which Parliament, press, and platform were lending themselves to the Premier's ambition, was but an illustration of what Carlyle had always said about the practical value of English institutions; but he was disgusted that the leaders in the present insanity should be those from whom alone resistance could be hoped for against the incoming of democracy. It was something worse than even their Reform Bill ten years before. He saw that it could lead to nothing but the discredit, perhaps the final ruin of the Conservative party, and the return of Mr. Gladstone, to work fresh mischief in Ireland. He foresaw all that has happened as accurately as if he had been a mechanically inspired prophet; and there was something of the old fire of the 'Latter-Day Pamphlets' in the tone in which he

talked of what was coming. John Carlyle had spent the spring of 1877 in Cheyne Row. He had left at the end of April, when the excitement was growing hot. His brother writes April 28 :—

> Dismal rumours are afloat, that Dizzy secretly intends to break in upon the Russian-Turkish War, and supporting himself by his Irish Home Rulers, great troop of commonplace Tories, Jews, &c., suddenly get Parliament to support him in a new Philo-Turk war against Russia—the maddest thing human imagination could well conceive. I am strongly urged to write something further upon it, but cannot feel that I have anything new to say.

Events move fast in these days, and one nail drives out another ; but we all remember the winter campaign which brought the Russians to Constantinople and the English fleet to the Dardanelles. Opinion in England was all but prepared to allow the Government to throw itself into the fray—all but—but not entirely. If initiative could be forced upon the Russians, those who wished for a fresh struggle could have it. A scheme was said to have been formed either to seize Gallipoli or to take some similar step, under pretence of protecting English interests, which would have driven Russia, however reluctant she might be, into a declaration of war. The plan, whatever it may have been, was kept a secret ; but there is reason to believe that preparations were actually made, that commanders were chosen, and instructions were almost on their way, which would have committed the country beyond recall. Carlyle heard of this, not as he said from idle rumour, but from some authentic source ; and he heard too that there was not a moment to lose. On the 5th of May he writes to his brother :—

After much urgency and with a dead-lift effort, I have this day got issued through the 'Times' a small indispensable deliverance on the Turk and Dizzy question. Dizzy, it appears, to the horror of those who have any interest in him and his proceedings, has decided to have a new war for the Turk against all mankind; and this letter hopes to drive a nail through his mad and maddest speculations on that side.

The letter to the 'Times' was brief, not more than three or four lines; but it was emphatic in its tone, and was positive about the correctness of the information. Whether he was right, or whether some one had misled him, there is no evidence before the public to show. But the secret, if secret there was, had thus been disclosed prematurely. The letter commanded attention as coming from a man who was unlikely to have spoken without grounds, and any unexpected shock, slight though it may be, will disturb a critical operation. This was Carlyle's last public act in this world; and if he contributed ever so little to preventing England from committing herself to a policy of which the mischief would have been immeasurable, counterbalanced by nothing, save a brief popularity to the Tory party, it was perhaps also the most useful act in his whole life.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

A.D. 1877–81. ÆT. 82–85.

Conversation and habits of life—Estimate of leading politicians—Visit from Lord Wolseley — Lord Beaconsfield and Mr. Gladstone — Dislike of Jews—The English Liturgy—An afternoon in Westminster Abbey — Progress — Democracy — Religion—The Bible—Characteristics.

My tale draws to an end. In representing Carlyle's thoughts on men and things, I have confined myself as much as possible to his own words in his journals and letters. To report correctly the language of conversations, especially when extended over a wide period, is almost an impossibility. The listener, in spite of himself, adds something of his own in colour, form, or substance.

I knew Carlyle, however, so long and so intimately, that I heard many things from him which are not to be found under his hand; many things more fully dilated on, which are there only hinted at, and slight incidents about himself for which I could make no place in my narrative. I have already noticed the general character of his talk with me. I add here some few memorabilia, taken either from notes hastily written down, or from my own recollection, which I believe in the main to be correct.

When the shock of his grief had worn off, and

he had completed his expiatory memoir, he became more composed, and could discourse with his old fulness, and more calmly than in earlier times. A few hours alone with him furnished then the most delightful entertainment. We walked five or six miles a day in Hyde Park or Battersea, or in the environs of Kensington. As his strength declined, we used the help of an omnibus, and extended our excursions farther. In his last years he drove daily in a fly, out Harrow way, or to Richmond or Sydenham, or wherever it might be. Occasionally, in the warm days of early summer, he would go with me to Kew Gardens to see the flowers or hear the cuckoo and the nightingales. He was impervious to weather—never carried an umbrella, but, with a mackintosh and his broad-brimmed hat, let the rain do its worst upon him. The driving days were the least interesting to me, for his voice grew weak, and, my own hearing being imperfect, I lost much of what he said; but we often got out to walk, and then he was as audible as ever.

He was extremely sensitive, and would become uneasy and even violent—often without explaining himself—for the most unexpected reasons. It will be remembered that he had once stayed at Malvern with Dr. Gully, and on the whole had liked Gully, or had at least been grateful to him. Many years after Dr. Gully's name had come before the world again, in connection with the Balham mystery, and Carlyle had been shocked and distressed about it. We had been out at Sydenham. He wished to be at home at a particular hour. The time was short, and I told the coachman to go back quickly the nearest

way. He became suddenly agitated, insisted that the man was going wrong, and at last peremptorily ordered him to take another road. I said that it would be a long round, and that we should be late, but to no purpose, and we gave him his way. By-and-by, when he grew cool, he said, 'We should have gone through Balham. I cannot bear to pass that house.'

In an omnibus his arbitrary ways were very amusing. He always craved for fresh air, took his seat by the door when he could get it, and sat obliquely in the corner to avoid being squeezed. The conductors knew him, and his appearance was so marked that the passengers generally knew him also, and treated him with high respect. A stranger on the box one day, seeing Carlyle get in, observed that the 'old fellow 'ad a queer 'at.' 'Queer 'at!' answered the driver; 'ay, he may wear a queer 'at, but what would you give for the 'ed-piece that's a inside of it?'

He went often by omnibus to the Regent Circus, walked from thence up Regent Street and Portland Place into the Park, and returned the same way. Portland Place, being airy and uncrowded, pleased him particularly. We were strolling along it during the Russo-Turkish crisis, one afternoon, when we met a Foreign Office official, who was in the Cabinet secrets. Knowing me, he turned to walk with us, and I introduced him to Carlyle, saying who he was. C. took the opportunity of delivering himself in the old eruptive style; the Geyser throwing up whole volumes of steam and stones. It was very fine, and was the last occasion on which I ever heard him break out

in this way. Mr. —— wrote to me afterwards to tell me how much interested he had been, adding, however, that he was still in the dark as to whether it was his eyes or the Turks' that had been damned at such a rate. I suppose I might have answered both.

He spoke much on politics and on the characters of public men. From the British Parliament he was profoundly convinced that no more good was to be looked for. A democratic Parliament, from the nature of it, would place persons at the head of affairs increasingly unfit to deal with them. Bad would be followed by worse, and worse by worst, till the very fools would see that the system must end. Lord Wolseley, then Sir Garnet, went with me once to call in Cheyne Row, Carlyle having expressed a wish to see him. He was much struck with Sir Garnet, and talked freely with him on many subjects. He described the House of Commons as 'six hundred talking asses, set to make the laws and administer the concerns of the greatest empire the world had ever seen;' with other uncomplimentary phrases. When we rose to go, he said, 'Well, Sir, I am glad to have made your acquaintance, and I wish you well. There is one duty which I hope may yet be laid upon you before you leave this world—to lock the door of yonder place, and turn them all out about their business.'

Of the two Parliamentary chiefs then alternately ruling, I have already said that he preferred Mr. Disraeli, and continued to prefer him, even after his wild effort to make himself arbiter of Europe. Disraeli, he thought, was under no illusions about him-

self. To him the world was a mere stage, and he a mere actor playing a part upon it. He had no serious beliefs, and made no pretences. He understood, as well as Carlyle himself, whither England was going, with its fine talk of progress; but it would last his time; he could make a figure in conducting its destinies, or at least amuse himself scientifically, like Mephistopheles. He was not an Englishman, and had no true care for England. The Conservatives, in choosing him for their leader, had sealed their own fate. He had made his fame by assailing Peel, the last of the great order of English ministers. He was dexterous in Parliamentary manœuvres, but looked only to winning in divisions, and securing his party their turn of power. If with his talents he had possessed the instincts of a statesman, there was anarchic Ireland to be brought to order; there were the Colonies to be united with the Empire; there was the huge, hungry, half-human population of our enormous towns to be drafted out over the infinite territories of Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, where, with land to cultivate and pure air to breathe, they might recover sanity of soul and limb.

He used to speak with real anger of the argument that such poor wretches were wanted at home in their squalid alleys, that labour might continue cheap. It was an argument worthy only of Carib cannibals. This was the work cut out for English Conservatives, and they were shutting their eyes to it because it was difficult, and were rushing off, led by Dizzy, into Russian wars.

Mr. Disraeli, however, had, he admitted, some good qualities. He could see *facts*, a supreme merit

in Carlyle's eyes. He was good-natured. He bore no malice. If he was without any lofty virtues, he affected no virtuous airs. Mr. Gladstone Carlyle considered to be equally incapable of high or sincere purpose, but with this difference, that he supposed himself to have what he had not. He did not look on Mr. Gladstone merely as an orator, who, knowing nothing as it ought to be known, had flung his force into words and specious sentiments; but as the representative of the multitudinous cants of the age—religious, moral, political, literary; differing in this point from other leading men, that the cant seemed actually true to him; that he believed it all and was prepared to act on it. He, in fact, believed Mr. Gladstone to be one of those fatal figures, created by England's evil genius, to work irreparable mischief, which no one but he could have executed.

This, in sum, was the opinion which he expressed to me a hundred times, with a hundred variations, and in this imperfect form I have here set it down. In a few years, the seed which Mr. Gladstone has sown in Ireland and elsewhere will have ripened to the harvest. 'All political follies,' Carlyle says somewhere, 'issue at last in a broken head to somebody. That is the final outcome of them.' The next generation will see whether we are to have broken heads in Ireland, or peace and prosperity.

His dislike for Disraeli was perhaps aggravated by his dislike of Jews He had a true Teutonic aversion for that unfortunate race. They had no *humour*, for one thing, and showed no trace of it at any period of their history—a fatal defect in Carlyle's eyes, who regarded no man or people as good for

anything who were without a 'genial sympathy with the under side.' They had contributed nothing, besides, to the 'wealth' of mankind, being mere dealers in money, gold, jewels, or else old clothes, material and spiritual. He stood still one day, opposite Rothschild's great house at Hyde Park Corner, looked at it a little, and said, 'I do not mean that I want King John back again, but if you ask me which mode of treating these people to have been the nearest to the will of the Almighty about them—to build them palaces like that, or to take the pincers for them, I declare for the pincers.' Then he imagined himself King John, with the Baron on the bench before him. 'Now, sir, the State requires some of those millions you have heaped together with your financing work. "You won't?" very well,' and he gave a twist with his wrist—'Now will you?' and then another twist, till the millions were yielded. I would add, however, that the Jews were not the only victims whose grinders he believed democracy would make free with.

London housebuilding was a favourite text for a sermon from him. He would point to rows of houses so slightly put together that they stood only by the support they gave to one another, intended only to last out a brief lease, with no purpose of continuance, either to themselves or their owners. 'Human life,' he said, was not possible in such houses. All real worth in man came of stability. Character grew from roots like a tree. In healthy times the family home was constructed to last for ages; sons to follow their fathers, working at the same business, with established methods of thought and action. Modern

houses were symbols of the universal appetite for change. They were not houses at all. They were tents of nomads. The modern artisan had no *home*, and did not know what home meant. Everything was now a makeshift. Men lived for the present. They had no future to look forward to, for none could say what the future was to be. The London streets and squares were an unconscious confession of it.

For the same reason he respected such old institutions as were still standing among us—not excepting even the Church of England. He called it the most respectable teaching body at present in existence; and he thought it might stand for a while yet if its friends would let it alone. 'Your rusty kettle,' he said, 'will continue to boil your water for you if you don't try to mend it. Begin tinkering, and there is an end of your kettle.' It could not last for ever, for what it had to say was not wholly true. Puritanism was a noble thing while it was sincere, but that was not true either. All doctrines had to go, after the truth of them came to be suspected. But as long as men could be found to work the Church of England who believed the Prayer-book sincerely, he had not the least wish to see the fall of it precipitated. He disliked the liberal school of clergy. Let it once be supposed that the clergy generally were teaching what they did not believe themselves, and the whole thing would become a hideous hypocrisy.

He himself had for many years attended no place of worship. Nowhere could he hear anything which he regarded as true, and to be insincere in word or act was not possible to him. But liturgies and such-

like had a mournful interest for him, as fossils of belief which once had been genuine. A lady—Lady Ashburton, I think—induced him once, late in his life, to go with her to St. Paul's. He had never before heard the English Cathedral Service, and far away in the nave, in the dim light, where the words were indistinct, or were disguised in music, he had been more impressed than he expected to be. In the prayers he recognised 'a true piety,' which had once come straight out of the heart. The distant 'Amen' of the choristers and the roll of the great organ brought tears into his eyes. He spoke so feelingly of this, that I tempted him to try again at Westminster Abbey. I told him that Dean Stanley, for whom he had a strong regard, would preach, and this was perhaps another inducement. The experiment proved dangerous. We were in the Dean's seat. A minor canon was intoning close to Carlyle's ear. The chorister boys were but three yards off, and the charm of distance was exchanged for contact which was less enchanting. The lines of worshippers in front of him, sitting while pretending to kneel, making their responses, bowing in the creed by habit, and mechanically repeating the phrases of it, when their faces showed that it was habit only, without genuine conviction; this and the rest brought back the feeling that it was but play-acting after all. I could see the cloud gathering in his features, and I was alarmed for what I had done before the service was half over. Worst of all, through some mistake, the Dean did not preach, and in the place of him was a popular orator, who gave us three quarters of an hour of sugary eloquence. For a while Carlyle bore it like a hero. But by-

and-by I heard the point of his stick rattle audibly on the floor. He crushed his hat angrily at each specially emphatic period, and groans followed, so loud that some of the congregation sitting near, who appeared to know him, began to look round. Mrs. D——, the Dean's cousin, who was in the seat with us, exchanged frightened glances with me. I was the most uneasy of all, for I could see into his mind; and at the too florid peroration I feared that he would rise and insist on going out, or even, like Oliver, exclaim, 'Leave your fooling, sir, and come down!' Happily the end arrived before a crisis, and we escaped a catastrophe which would have set London ringing.

The loss of the use of his right hand was more than a common misfortune. It was the loss of everything. The powers of writing, even with pencil, went finally seven years before his death. His mind was vigorous and restless as ever. Reading without an object was weariness. Idleness was misery; and I never knew him so depressed as when the fatal certainty was brought home to him. To this, as to other immediate things, time partly reconciled him; but at first he found life intolerable under such conditions. Every day he told me he was weary of it, and spoke wistfully of the old Roman method. 'A man must stick to his post,' he said, 'and do his best there as long as he can work. When his tools are taken from him, it is a sign that he may retire.' When a dear friend who, like himself, had lost his wife and was heart-broken, took leave in Roman fashion, he was emphatic in his approval. Increasing weakness only partially tamed him into patience, or reconciled

him to an existence which, even at its best, he had more despised than valued.

To Carlyle, as to Hamlet, the modern world was but 'a pestilent congregation of vapours.' Often and often I have heard him repeat Macbeth's words:—

> To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
> Creeps on this petty pace from day to day
> To the last syllable of recorded time:
> And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
> The way to dusky death. Out, out, brief candle!
> Life's but a walking shadow; a poor player
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
> And then is heard no more. It is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing.

He was especially irritated when he heard the ordinary cant about progress, unexampled prosperity, &c. Progress whither? he would ask, and prosperity in what? People talked as if each step which they took was in the nature of things a step upward; as if each generation was necessarily wiser and better than the one before; as if there was no such thing as progressing down to hell; as if human history was anything else but a history of birth and death, advance and decline, of rise and fall, in all that men have ever made or done. The only progress to which Carlyle would allow the name was moral progress; the only prosperity the growth of better and nobler men and women: and as humanity could only expand into high dimensions in an organic society when the wise ruled and the ignorant obeyed, the progress which consisted in destroying authority, and leaving everyone to follow his own will and pleasure, was progress down to the devil and his angels. That, in his opinion, was

the evident goal of the course in which we were all hurrying on in such high spirits. Of the theory of equality of voting, the good and the bad on the same level, Judas Iscariot and Paul of Tarsus counting equal at the polling booth, the annals of human infatuation, he used to say, did not contain the equal.

Sometimes he thought that we were given over and lost without remedy; that we should rot away through inglorious centuries, sinking ever deeper into anarchy, protected by our strip of sea from a violent end till the earth was weary of us. At other times the inherent manliness of the English race, inherited from nobler ages, and not yet rinsed out of them, gave him hopes that we might yet be delivered.

I reminded him of the comment of Dion Cassius on the change in Rome from a commonweath to an empire. In a democracy, Cassius says, a country cannot be well administered, even by accident, for it is ruled by the majority, and the majority are always fools. An emperor is but a single man, and may, if the gods please, be a wise one. But this did not please Carlyle either. The emperors that Rome got, and that we should be likely to get, were of the Copper Captain type, and worse than democracy itself. The hope, if there was hope, lay in a change of heart in the English people, and the re-awakening of the nobler element in them; and this meant a recovered sense of 'religion.' They would rise out of their delusions when they recognised once more the sacred meaning of *duty*. Yet *what religion*? He did not think it possible that educated honest men could even profess much longer to believe in historical Christianity. He had been reading the Bible. Half of it seemed

to be inspired truth, half of it human illusion. 'The prophet says, "Thus saith the Lord." Yes, sir, but how if it be not the Lord, but only you who take your own fancies for the word of the Lord.' I spoke to him of what he had done himself. Then as always he thought little of it, but he said, 'They must come to something *like* that if any more good is to grow out of them.' Scientific accountings for the moral sense were all moonshine. Right and wrong in all things, great and small, had been ruled eternally by the Power which made us. A friend was arguing on the people's right to decide this or that, and, when Carlyle dissented, asked who was to be the judge. Carlyle fiercely answered, 'Hell fire will be the judge. God Almighty will be the judge, now and always.'

The history of mankind is the history of creeds growing one out of the other. I said it was possible that if Protestant Christianity ceased to be credible, some fresh superstition might take its place, or even that Popery might come back for a time, developed into new conditions. If the Olympian gods could survive Aristophanes 800 years; if a Julian could still hope to maintain Paganism as the religion of the empire, I did not see why the Pope might not survive Luther for at least as long. Carlyle would not hear of this; but he did admit that the Mass was the most genuine relic of religious belief now left to us. He was not always consistent in what he said of Christianity. He would often speak of it with Goethe 'as a height from which, when once achieved, mankind could never descend.' He did not himself believe in the Resurrection as a historical fact, yet he was angry and scornful at Strauss's language about it. 'Did

not our hearts burn within us?' he quoted, insisting on the honest conviction of the apostles.

The associations of the old creed which he had learnt from his mother and in the Ecclefechan kirk hung about him to the last. I was walking with him one Sunday afternoon in Battersea Park. In the open circle among the trees was a blind man and his daughter, she singing hymns, he accompanying her on some instrument. We stood listening. She sang Faber's 'Pilgrims of the Night.' The words were trivial, but the air, though simple, had something weird and unearthly about it. 'Take me away!' he said after a few minutes, 'I shall cry if I stay longer.'

He was not what is commonly called an amiable man. Amiability runs readily into insincerity. He spoke his mind freely, careless to whom he gave offence: but as no man ever delighted more to hear of any brave or good action, so there was none more tender-hearted or compassionate of suffering. Stern and disdainful to wrongdoers, especially if they happened to be in high places, he was ever pitiful to the children of misfortune. Whether they were saints or sinners made no difference. If they were miserable his heart was open to them. He was like Goethe's elves:—

> Wenn er heilig, wenn er böse,
> Jammert sie der Unglücksmann.

His memory was extremely tenacious, as is always the case with men of genius. He would relate anecdotes for hours together of Scotch peasant life, of old Edinburgh students, old Ecclefechan villagers, wandering from one thing to another, but always dwelling on the simple and pious side of things, never

on the scandalous or wicked. Burns's songs were constantly on his lips. He knew them so well that they seemed part of his soul. Never can I forget the tone in which he would repeat to me, revealing unconsciously where his own thoughts were wandering, the beautiful lines :—

> Had we never loved sae kindly,
> Had we never loved sae blindly,
> Never met and never parted,
> We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

Not once but many times the words would burst from him, rather as the overflow from his own heart than as addressed to me.

In his last years he grew weak, glad to rest upon a seat when he could find one, glad of an arm to lean on when on his feet. He knew that his end must be near, and it was seldom long out of his mind. But he was not conscious of a failure of intellectual power, nor do I think that to the last there was any essential failure. He forgot names and places, as old men always do, but he recollected everything that was worth remembering. He caught the point of every new problem with the old rapidity. He was eager as ever for new information. In his intellect nothing pointed to an end ; and the experience that the mind did not necessarily decay with the body confirmed his conviction that it was not a function of the body, that it had another origin and might have another destination. When he spoke of the future and its uncertainties he fell back invariably on the last words of his favourite hymn :—

> Wir heissen euch hoffen.
> (We bid you to hope.)

Meanwhile his business with the world was over, his connection with it was closing in, and he had only to bid it Farewell.

> Fear no more the heat of the sun,
> Nor the stormy winter rages ;
> Now the long day's task is done,
> Home art gone and ta'en thy wages.
> Golden lads and lasses must,
> Like chimney-sweepers, come to dust.

Often these words were on his lips. *Home*, too, he felt that he was going ; home to those 'dear' ones who had gone before him. His wages he has not taken with him. His wages will be the love and honour of the whole English race who read his books and know his history. If his writings are forgotten, he has left in his life a model of simplicity and uprightness which few will ever equal and none will excel. For he had not been sustained in his way through this world by an inherited creed which could give him hope and confidence. The inherited creed had crumbled down, and he had to form a belief for himself by lonely meditation. Nature had not bestowed on him the robust mental constitution which passes by the petty trials of life without heeding them, or the stubborn stoicism which endures in silence. Nature had made him weak, passionate, complaining, dyspeptic in body and sensitive in spirit, lonely, irritable, and morbid. He became what he was by his moral rectitude of principle, by a conscientious resolution to do right, which never failed him in serious things from his earliest years, and, though it could not change his temperament, was the inflexible guide of his conduct. Neither self-indul-

gence, nor ambition, nor any meaner motive, ever led him astray from the straight road of duty, and he left the world at last, having never spoken, never written a sentence which he did not believe with his whole heart, never stained his conscience by a single deliberate act which he could regret to remember.

CHAPTER XXXV.

A.D. 1877–81. ÆT. 82–85.

Statues—Portraits—Millais's picture—Study of the Bible—Illness and death of John Carlyle—Preparation of Memoirs—Last words about it—Longing for death—The end—Offer of a tomb in Westminster Abbey—Why declined—Ecclefechan churchyard—Conclusion.

A BRIEF chapter closes my long story. All things and all men come to their end. This biography ends. The biographer himself will soon end, and will go where he will have to answer for the manner in which he has discharged his trust, happy so far that he has been allowed to live to complete an arduous and anxious undertaking. In the summer of 1877 Carlyle, at my urgent entreaty, sat for his picture to Mr. Millais. Mr. Boehm had made a seated statue of him, as satisfactory a likeness in face and figure as could be rendered in sculpture; and the warm regard which had grown up between the artist and himself had enabled Mr. Boehm to catch with more than common success the shifting changes of his expression. But there was still something wanting. A portrait of Carlyle completely satisfactory did not yet exist, and if executed at all could be executed only by the most accomplished painter of his age. Millais, I believe,

had never attempted a more difficult subject. In the second sitting I observed what seemed a miracle. The passionate vehement face of middle life had long disappeared. Something of the Annandale peasant had stolen back over the proud air of conscious intellectual power. The scorn, the fierceness was gone, and tenderness and mild sorrow had passed into its place. And yet under Millais's hands the old Carlyle stood again upon the canvas as I had not seen him for thirty years. The inner secret of the features had been evidently caught. There was a likeness which no sculptor, no photographer, had yet equalled or approached. Afterwards, I knew not how, it seemed to fade away. Millais grew dissatisfied with his work and, I believe, never completed it. Carlyle's own verdict was modestly uncertain.

The picture, he said, does not please many, nor in fact myself altogether; but it is surely strikingly like in every feature, and the fundamental condition was that Millais should paint what he was able to see.

His correspondence with his brother John, never intermitted while they both lived, was concerned chiefly with the books with which he was occupying himself. He read Shakespeare again. He read Goethe again, and then went completely through the 'Decline and Fall.'

I have finished Gibbon, he wrote, with a great deduction from the high esteem I have had of him ever since the old Kirkcaldy days, when I first read the twelve volumes of poor Irving's copy in twelve consecutive days. A man of endless reading and research, but of a most disagreeable style, and a great want of the highest faculties (which indeed are very rare) of what we could call a classical historian, compared

with Herodotus, for instance, and his perfect clearness and simplicity in every part.

In speaking of Gibbon's work to me he made one remark which is worth recording. In earlier years he had spoken contemptuously of the Athanasian controversy, of the Christian world torn in pieces over a diphthong, and he would ring the changes in broad Annandale on the Hom*o*ousion and the Hom*oi*ousion. He told me now that he perceived Christianity itself to have been at stake. If the Arians had won, it would have dwindled away into a legend.

He continued to read the Bible, 'the significance of which,' he found, 'deep and wonderful almost as much as it ever used to be.' Bold and honest to the last, he would not pretend to believe what his intellect rejected, and even in Job, his old favourite, he found more wonder than satisfaction. But the Bible itself, the Bible and Shakespeare, remained 'the best books' to him that were ever written.

He was growing weaker and weaker, however, and the exertion of thought exhausted him.

I do not feel to ail anything, he said of himself, November 2, 1878, except unspeakable and, I think, increasing weakness, as of a young child—the arrival, in fact, of second childhood, such as is to be expected when the date of departure is nigh. I am grateful to Heaven for one thing, that the state of my mind continues unaltered and perfectly clear: surely a blessing beyond expression compared with what the contrary would be. Let us pray to be grateful to the great Giver of Good, and for patience under whatever His will may be.

And again, November 7:—

The fact is, so far as I can read it, my strength is faded nearly quite away, and it begins to be more and more evident

to me that I shall not long have to struggle under this burden of life, but soon go to the refuge that is appointed for us all. For a long time back I have been accustomed to look at the *Ernster Freund* as the most merciful and indispensable refuge appointed by the Great Creator for his wearied children whose work is done. Alas, alas! the final mercy of God, it in late years always appears to me is, that He delivers us from life which has become a task too hard for us.

As long as John Carlyle survived, he had still the associate of his early years, on whose affection he could rely, and John, as the younger of the two, might be expected to outlive him. But this last consolation he was to see pass from him. John Carlyle, too, was sinking under the weight of years. Illness bore heavily on him, and his periodic visits to Chelsea had ceased to be manageable. His home was at Dumfries, and the accounts of him which reached Cheyne Row all through that winter were less and less hopeful. It was a winter memorable for its long, stern, implacable frost, which bore hard on the aged and the failing. Though they could not meet, they could still write to each other.

To John Carlyle.

Chelsea: December 14, 1878.

My dear Brother,—On coming down stairs from a dim and painful night I find your punctual letter here, announcing that matters are no better with yourself, probably in some respects even worse. We must be patient, dear brother, and take piously if we can what days and nights are sent us. The night before last was unusually good with me. All the rest, especially last night, were worse than usual, and little or no sleep attainable by me. In fact I seem to perceive that there is only one hope, that of being called away out of

this unmanageable scene. One must not presume to form express desires about it, but for a long time back the above has been my clear conviction. About you, dear brother, I think daily with a tender sorrow for your sake, and surely have to own with you that there is no good news to be expected from either side. God's will be done. The frost, I perceive, will not abate yet, and the darkness gives no sign of lessening either. Your case, dear brother, I feel to be even worse than my own, and I am often painfully thinking of you. Let us summon all the virtue that is in us, if there be any virtue at all, and quit us like men and not like fools. Mary sends her kindest love. To me she is unwearied in her attention; rose last night, for example, as she ever does at my summons; but was not able last night, for the first time, to do me any real good. I send my love to sister Jean, and am always eager for news of her. Blessings on you all.

I am ever, dear brother, affectionately yours,

T. CARLYLE.

A little more and John was gone. As his condition grew hopeless, Carlyle was afraid every day that the end had come, and that the news had been kept back from him. 'Is my brother John dead?' he asked me one day as I joined him in his carriage. He was not actually dead then, but he suffered only for a few more days. John Carlyle would have been remembered as a distinguished man if he had not been overshadowed by his greater brother. After his early struggles he worked in his profession for many careful years, and saved a considerable fortune. Then, in somewhat desultory fashion, he took to literature. He wanted brilliancy, and still more he wanted energy, but he had the virtue of his family—veracity. Whatever he undertook he did faithfully, with all his ability, and his translation of Dante is the best that exists. He needed the spur, however, before he would

exert himself, and I believe he attempted nothing serious afterwards. In disposition he was frank, kind-hearted, generous; entirely free from all selfishness or ambition; simple as his brother in his personal habits; and ready always with money, time, or professional assistance, wherever his help was needed. When Carlyle bequeathed Craigenputtock to the University of Edinburgh, John too settled a handsome sum for medical bursaries there, to encourage poor students. These two brothers, born in a peasant's home in Annandale, owing little themselves to an Alma Mater which had missed discovering their merits, were doing for Scotland's chief University what Scotland's peers and merchants, with their palaces and deer forests and social splendour, had, for some cause, too imperfectly supplied.

James Carlyle and three sisters still remained, and Carlyle was tenderly attached to them. But John had been his early friend, the brother of his heart, and his death was a sore blow. He bore his loss manfully, submitting to the inevitable as to the will of his Father and Master. He was very feeble, but the months went by without producing much visible change, save that latterly in his drives he had to take a supply of liquid food with him. He was still fairly cheerful, and tried, though with diminished eagerness, to take an interest in public affairs. He even thought for a moment of taking a personal part in the preparation of his Memoirs. Among his papers I had found the Reminiscences of his father, of Irving, of Jeffrey, of Southey and Wordsworth. I had to ask myself whether these characteristic, and as I thought, and continue to think, extremely beautiful

autobiographical fragments, should be broken up and absorbed in his biography, or whether they ought not to be published as they stood, in a separate volume. I consulted him about it. He had almost forgotten what he had written; but as soon as he had recalled it to his recollection he approved of the separate publication, and added that they had better be brought out immediately on his death. The world would then be talking about him, and would have something authentic to go upon. It was suggested that he might revise the sheets personally, and that the book might appear in his lifetime as edited by himself. He turned the proposal over in his mind, and considered that perhaps he might try. On reflection, however, he found the effort would be too much for him. He gave it up, and left everything as before to me, to do what I thought proper.

At this time there had been no mention and no purpose of including in the intended volume the Memoir of Mrs. Carlyle. This was part of his separate bequest to me, and I was then engaged, as I have already said, in incorporating both memoir and letters in the history of his early life. I think a year must have elapsed after this before the subject was mentioned between us again. At length, however, one day about three months before his death, he asked me very solemnly, and in a tone of the saddest anxiety, what I proposed to do about 'the Letters and Memorials.' I was sorry—for a fresh evidence at so late a date of his wish that the Letters should be published as he had left them would take away my discretion, and I could no longer treat them as I had begun to do. But he was so sorrowful and

earnest—though still giving no positive order—that I could make no objection. I promised him that the Letters should appear with such reservations as might be indispensable. The Letters implied the Memoir, for it had been agreed upon from the first between us that, if Mrs. Carlyle's Letters were published, his Memoir of her must be published also. I decided, therefore, that the Memoir should be added to the volume of Reminiscences ; the Letters to follow at an early date. I briefly told him this. He was entirely satisfied, and never spoke about it again.

I have said enough already of Carlyle's reason for preparing these papers, of his bequest of them to me, and of the embarrassment into which I was thrown by it. The arguments on either side were weighty, and ten years of consideration had not made it more easy to choose between them. My final conclusion may have been right or wrong, but the influence which turned the balance was Carlyle's persevering wish, and my own conviction that it was a wish supremely honourable to him.

This was in the autumn of 1880, a little before his 85th birthday. He was growing so visibly infirm, that neither he himself nor any of us expected him to survive the winter. He was scarcely able even to wish it.

He was attended by a Scotch physician who had lately settled in London. He disliked doctors generally, and through life had allowed none of them near him except his brother ; but he submitted now to occasional visits, though he knew that he was past help and that old age was a disease for which there was no earthly remedy. I was sitting with him one day

when this gentleman entered and made the usual inquiries. Carlyle growled some sort of answer, and then said :—

I think very well of you, sir. I expect that you will have good success here in London, and will well deserve it. For me you can do nothing. The only thing you could do, you must not do—that is, help me to make an end of this. We must just go on as we are.

He was entirely occupied with his approaching change, and with the world and its concerns we could see that he had done for ever. In January he was visibly sinking. His political anticipations had been exactly fulfilled. Mr. Gladstone had come back to power. Fresh jars of paraffin had been poured on the fire in Ireland, and anarchy and murder were the order of the day. I mentioned something of it to him one day. He listened indifferently. 'These things do not interest you?' I said. 'Not the least,' he answered, and turned languidly away. He became worse a day or two after that. I went down to see him. His bed had been moved into the drawing-room, which still bore the stamp of his wife's hand upon it. Her workbox and other ladies' trifles lay about in their old places. He had forbidden them to be removed, and they stood within reach of his dying hand.

He was wandering when I came to his side. He recognised me. 'I am very ill,' he said. 'Is it not strange that those people should have chosen the very oldest man in all Britain to make suffer in this way?'

I answered, 'We do not exactly know why those people act as they do. They may have reasons that

we cannot guess at.' 'Yes,' he said, with a flash of the old intellect, 'it would be rash to say that they have no reasons.'

When I saw him next his speech was gone. His eyes were as if they did not see, or were fixed on something far away. I cannot say whether he heard me when I spoke to him, but I said, 'Ours has been a long friendship; I will try to do what you wish.'

This was on the 4th of February, 1881. The morning following he died. He had been gone an hour when I reached the house. He lay calm and still, an expression of exquisite tenderness subduing his rugged features into feminine beauty. I have seen something like it in Catholic pictures of dead saints, but never, before or since, on any human countenance.

So closed a long life of eighty-five years—a life in which extraordinary talents had been devoted, with an equally extraordinary purity of purpose, to his Maker's service, so far as he could see and understand that Maker's will—a life of single-minded effort to do right and only that; of constant truthfulness in word and deed. Of Carlyle, if of anyone, it may be said that 'he was a man indeed in whom was no guile.' No insincerity ever passed his lips; no dishonest or impure thought ever stole into his heart. In all those long years the most malicious scrutiny will search in vain for a single serious blemish. If he had frailties and impatiences, if he made mistakes and suffered for them, happy those whose conscience has nothing worse to charge them with. Happy those who, if their infirmities have caused pain to others

who were dear to them, have, like Carlyle, made the fault into a virtue by the simplicity and completeness of their repentance.

He had told me when Mrs. Carlyle died, that he hoped to be buried beside her at Haddington. It was ordered otherwise, either by himself on reconsideration, or for some other cause. He had foreseen that an attempt might be made to give him a more distinguished resting-place in Westminster Abbey. For many reasons he had decided that it was not to be. He objected to parts of the English burial service, and, veracious in everything, did not choose that words should be read over him which he regarded as untrue. 'The grain of corn,' he said, 'does not die; or if it dies, does not rise again.' Something, too, there was of the same proud feeling which had led him to decline a title. Funerals in the Abbey were not confined to the deserving. When ——— was buried there he observed to me, 'There will be a general gaol delivery in that place one of these days.' His own direction was that he was to lie with his father and mother at the spot where in his life he had made so often a pious pilgrimage, the old kirkyard at Ecclefechan.

Dean Stanley wrote to me, after he was gone, to offer the Abbey, in the warmest and most admiring terms. He had applied to me as one of the executors, and I had to tell him that it had been otherwise arranged. He asked that the body might rest there for a night on the way to Scotland. This also we were obliged to decline. Deeply affected as he was, he preached on the Sunday following on Carlyle's work and character, introducing into his sermon a

beautiful passage which I had given to him out of the last journal.

The organ played afterwards the Dead March in 'Saul'—grand, majestic—as England's voice of farewell to one whose work for England had closed, and yet had not closed. It is still, perhaps, rather in its infancy; for he, being dead, yet speaks to us as no other man in this century has spoken or is likely to speak.

He was taken down in the night by the railway. I, Lecky, and Tyndall, alone of his London friends, were able to follow. We travelled by the mail train. We arrived at Ecclefechan on a cold dreary February morning; such a morning as he himself describes when he laid his mother in the same grave where he was now to rest. Snow had fallen, and road and field were wrapped in a white winding-sheet. The hearse, with the coffin, stood solitary in the station yard, as some waggon might stand, waiting to be unloaded. They do not study form in Scotland, and the absence of respect had nothing unusual about it. But the look of that black, snow-sprinkled object, standing there so desolate, was painful; and, to lose sight of it in the three hours which we had to wait, we walked up to Mainhill, the small farmhouse, two miles distant, where he had spent his boyhood and his university vacations. I had seen Mainhill before, my companions had not. The house had been enlarged since my previous visit, but the old part of it, the kitchen and the two bedrooms, of which it had consisted when the Carlyles lived there, remained as they had been, with the old alcoves, in which the beds were still standing. To complete the resem-

blance, another family of the same station in life now occupied it—a shrewd industrious farmer, whose wife was making cheeses in the dairy. Again there were eight children, the elder sons at school in the village, the little ones running about barefoot as Carlyle had done, the girls with their brooms and dusters, and one little fellow not strong enough for farm work, but believed to have gifts, and designed, by-and-by, for college. It was the old scene over again, the same stage, the same play, with new players. We stayed looking about us till it was time to go, and then waded back through the half-melted snow to the station. A few strangers had arrived from Edinburgh and elsewhere, but not many; for the family, simple in their habits, avoided display, and the day, and even the place, of the funeral, had not been made public. Two or three carriages were waiting, belonging to gentlemen in the neighbourhood. Mr. James Carlyle and his sisters were there, with their children, in carriages also, and there was a carriage for us. The hearse was set in movement, and we followed slowly down the half-mile of road which divides the station from the village. A crowd had gathered at the churchyard, not disorderly, but seemingly with no feeling but curiosity. There were boys and girls bright with ribands and coloured dresses, climbing upon the kirkyard walls. There was no minister—or at least no ceremony which implied the presence of a minister. I could not but contrast, in my own thoughts, that poor and almost ragged scene, with the trampled sleet and dirt, and *un*ordered if not *dis*ordered assemblage, with the sad ranks of mourners who would have attended in thousands had Dean

Stanley's offer been accepted. I half-regretted the resolution which had made the Abbey impossible. Melancholy, indeed, was the impression left upon me by that final leave-taking of my honoured master. The kirkyard was peopled with ghosts. All round me were headstones, with the names of the good old villagers of whom I had heard so many stories from him: the schoolmaster from whom he had learnt his first Latin, the blacksmith with whom his father had argued on the resurrection of the body, his father, mother, sister, woven into the life which was now over, and which it was to fall to myself to describe. But the graves were soiled with half-thawed sleet, the newspaper correspondents were busy with their pencils, the people were pressing and pushing as the coffin was lowered down. Not in this way, I thought for a moment, ought Scotland to have laid her best and greatest in his solemn sleeping-place. But it was for a moment only. It was as he had himself desired. They whom he had loved best had been buried so—all so—and with no other forms. The funeral prayers in Scotland are not offered at the grave, but in private houses, before or after. There was nothing really unsuitable in what habit had made natural and fit. It was over, and we left him to his rest.

In future years, in future centuries, strangers will come from distant lands—from America, from Australia, from New Zealand, from every isle or continent where the English language is spoken—to see the house where Carlyle was born, to see the green turf under which his dust is lying. Scotland will have raised a monument over his grave; but no monument is needed for one who has made an

eternal memorial for himself in the hearts of all to whom truth is the dearest of possessions.

'For, giving his soul to the common cause, he has won for himself a wreath which will not fade and a tomb the most honourable, not where his dust is decaying, but where his glory lives in everlasting remembrance. For of illustrious men all the earth is the sepulchre, and it is not the inscribed column in their own land which is the record of their virtues, but the unwritten memory of them in the hearts and minds of all mankind.'

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